RAMAPROSAD'S DEVOTIONAL SONGS

THE CULT OF SHAKTI

BY

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ढाई हजार अनमोल बोल

सम्पादक:- हनुमानप्रसाद पोद्दार

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Premchand Roychand Scholar

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.—Abbreviation.
APU.—Annapūrṇā UP., N.S.P., 1948.
BG.—Bhagavad Gītā.
Bhāg.—Bhāgavata.
BHS.—Bhaktisandarbha (Jīva Gosvāmī), C. U., 1960.
BRS.—Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu (Rūpa Gosvāmī), Vārānasī, 1888, Vikrama erā.
BS.—Bhagavatsandarbha (Jīva Gosvāmī), edited by Shyamlal Gosvami, Calcutta.
BSSV.—Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara's Śivasūtravārtika, (K.S.S.).
CCA.—Chaitanya-Charitāmṛta (Bengali) (Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja), Calcutta.
CHI.—Cultural Heritage of India, Calcutta, 1956.
Ch.S.S.—Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Benares.
C.U.—Calcutta University.
DBU.—Dhyanabindu Up., (N. S. P.).
DG.—Devī Gītā, Poona, 1915.
HPI.—History of Indian Philosophy (Jadunath Sinha), S.P.H.
I.—Introduction.
IPEW.—Indian Psychology: Emotion and Will (Jadunath Sinha), S.P.H., 1961.
K.S.S.—Kashmir Sanskrit Series.
MBh.—Mahābhārata.
MNTI.—Introduction to "Tantra of Great Liberation" (Arthur Avalon), London, 1913.
N.S.P.—Nirnay Sagar Press, Bombay.
NT.—New Testament.
OT.—Old Testament.
PD.—Padārthādarśa on ŚT., (Rāghavendra Bhaṭṭa) Vārānasī, 1934.
PH.—Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam (Kṣemerāja), E.T. (Jaidev Sing), Vārānasī, 1963.
PS.—Prayogasāra.

Ps.—Psalm, OT.
ŚD.—Śiva-dṛṣṭi (Śomānanda) (K.S.S.).
SBT.—Sarsavatī Bhavan Text, Vārānasī.
SLU.—Saubhāgya-lakṣmī UP. (N.S.P.).
SPH.—Sinha Publishing House, Calcutta—26.
SRU.—Sarasvatī-rahasya Up. (N.S.P.)
SS.—Svachchhanda-saṁgraha.
ŚT.—Śaradā-tilaka, Vārānasī, 1934.
STTS.—Ṣaṭ-triṁśat-tattva-sandoha (K.S.S.).
Śvet. Up.—Śvetāśvatara Up. (N.S P.).
TS.—Tantrasāra (Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamavāgīśa), Ch. S.S.
TTU.—Tripurā-tāpinī Up. (N.S.P.).
TVŚD.—Tāntrik Vāṅmay meṁ Śākta-dṛṣṭi (Hindi) (Gopinath Kavirāj), Patna.
Up.—Upaniṣad.
VS.—Vāyavīya-saṁhitā.
VSSV.—Varadarāja's Śivasūtravārtika (K.S.S.).
YCU.—Yogā-Chūḍāmaṇi Up. (N.S.P.).
YH.—Yoginīhṛdaya, S.B.T., 1963.
YHD.—Yoginīhṛdaya-dīpikā (SBT)., 1963.
YHS.—Yoginīhṛdaya-setubandha (S.B.T.).
YKU.—Yogakuṇḍalī Up. (N.S.P.).
YŚU.—Yogaśikhā Up. (N.S.P.).
YTU.—Yogatattva Up. (N.S.P.).

PREFACE

The saint-poet, Rāma Prasāda's devotional songs addressed to the Divine Mother have been sung by common people in Bengal for more than two centuries and evoked intense religious sentiments. The author of this book sincerely thinks that they should be the common treasure of all Indians and that the devotional songs of saints in all Indian languages should be translated into the other Indian languages. This will cement a union among all Indians and make for national integration. Further, devotional songs all over the world embody the same eternal truths and facts of direct spiritual experience of saints professing different religions and undergoing different spiritual disciplines, stripped of esoteric symbols and local colourings. If they are made accessible to all, it will pave the way for the coveted harmony of religions and the fellowship of faiths. With this object in view, the author has translated also Tulsidas's "Vinay Patrikā" (Hindi) and Kabir's 200 poems (Hindi) into Bengali prose,—which have not yet been published.

The author has translated Kavirañjan Rāma Prasāda Sen's Bengali songs into English prose in order to bring out their religious import for the comprehension of non-Bengali readers. He has not aimed at literal translation and elegance of language, but at the exposition of the religious ideas underlying them. The lines in the Bengali poems have been kept separate in the English version. Unintelligible words and symbols have been explained, and parallel passages from English poets, the "Old Testament," the "New Testament," the Upaniṣads and the "Bhagavad Gītā" have been added in the footnotes.

Rāma Prasāda's biography, the exposition of the philosophy of Śāktaism, and the Śakti-sādhanā or spiritual discipline have been given in the Introduction.

A few poems attributed to other Bengali Śākta poets by the editor of "Śāktapadāvalī" (Calcutta University) are included in this collection, because they are included in four other selections[1], and because they bear the name of Rāma Prasāda. It is possible that others' similar poems passed as Rāma Prasāda's because he was very famous as a saint-poet.

Śakti-sādhanā is much maligned, misunderstood, and thoughtlessly condemned. But the very fact that the great Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa and Śrī Aurobindo practiced it as a vital step to their God-realisation makes it imperative upon us to try comprehend its inner truth and significance. It harmonises works, devotion, knowledge, and meditation with one another, and synthesises them into an organic unity. It is a sure and potent means of transmuting our earthly life into life divine. It does not enjoin escapism,—a life of negation and asceticism,—but a life of affirmation, transformation, transcendence, and union.

If this translation, imperfect as it is, helps a little in clearing the mist and creating a genuine interest in Śakti-sādhanā, the author's labour will have been amply repaid.

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[1]Pashupati Chattopadhyaya, "Sādhak Kavi Rāma Prasāda" & "Padāvalī" & "Rāmaprasādī Saṅgīta" ; Jogendra Nath Gupta, "Sādhak Kavi Rāma Prasāda" ; Jogīndra Nath Chattopadhyoya, "Rāma Prasāda."

39, S. R. Das Road,
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Jadunath Sinha

INTRODUCTION

Rama Prasada's Life and Works

Rāma Prasāda was born in a Vāidya Śākta family at Hālisahar or Kumārhaṭṭa on the Gaṅgā (Hughli) near Calcutta about 250 years ago. Iśvara Puri, Chaitanya's spiritual teacher, was born in this village. Chaitanya paid a visit to this place. Rāma Prasāda gives a description of his ancestors and descendants in his Bengali poetical work "Vidyāsundara." Kīrtivāsa, a religious, generous, virtuous, devotee of the Divine Mother, Kālī, was his remote ancestor. Rāmeśwara was his grandfather. Rāma Rāma Sen was his father. He was educated, religious, generous, and respected. He was physician and an adept in Āyurvedic system of treatment. He had two wives. Nidhirāma was his son through his first wife—Kātyānyanī. Amvikā and Bhavānī were his two daughters, and Rāma Prasāda and Viśvanātha were his two sons through Siddheśvarī, his second wife. Bhavāni was married to Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Dāsa, of Calcutta which was a village at the time. He had two sons, Jagannātha and Kṛpārāma, who were attached to Rāma Prasāda, their maternal uncle.

Rāma Rāma Sen admitted Rāma Prasāda to Vidyānidhi's Sanskrit school (ṭole) where he learned Sanskrit grammar and literature and Bengali poetry, and became proficient in them. Then his father sent him to a Maulavi to learn Persian and Urdu which were the languages of the Muslim rulers. He became proficient in them also in a short time. He was very intelligent, had a genius for learning languages, and had a special gift for literature. He showed signs of poetic genius and spiritual inclinations during his adolescence. His

father wanted him to be a physician like him because that was his caste and family profession. But Rāma Prasāda showed utter disinclination to this profession.

In the prime of his youth Rāma Rāma married him to Śarvāni in conformity with the prevailing custom before he got any employment and could maintain his family. Rāma Prasāda and his wife were initiated by the spiritual teacher of the family, Śrīnātha Bhāṭṭāchārya alias Mādhavācharya, in a mantra (mystic formula) of the Divine Mother, Kālī, tutelary Deity of the family, Though Rāma Prasāda married, he was indifferent to the maintenance of his family, and did not search for an employment. Mādhavāchārya died one year after his initiation (dīkṣā) and consequently, Rāma Prasāda could not learn much from him about the cult of Śakti-worship. Fortunately for him, Kṛsnānanda Āgamavāgiśa. the author of "Tantrasāra", came from Navadwip to Kumārhaṭṭa. He was a great saint and devotee of Kālī. Rāma Prasāda leared the secrets of the worship of Kālī from him. He became a great devotee of Kālī and spent much of his time in worship, meditation and prayer. His father suddenly died without leaving enough land and property for his wife and children.

The maintenance of the family devolved upon Rāma Prasāda His relative, Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Dāsa, procured him a job in Calcutta. He was appointed a clerk on thirty rupees per month by Durgā Charaṇa Mitra of Garānhaṭā to keep accounts of his estate. He did his duties honestly and efficiently, and then composed and wrote songs in adoration of the Divine Mother in the blank space of the account book. His colleagues and superior officers were corrupt, grabbing, and fond of flattery. They were not satisfied with his behaviour because he was honest, conscientious and religious. They complained to the land-lord against his inefficiency in his work and advised him to give Rāma Prasāda a warning. The land-lord looked into the account book, and was amazed to read the soul-stirring songs addressed to the Divine Mother, full of devotion, love, and passionate attachment. Tears of joy rolled down his eyes. He called Rāma Prasāda, told

him to go home, worship the Divine Mother and compose songs for Her and granted him a monthly pension of thirty rupees.

Rāma Prasāda thanked him, went home, began to worship Kālī with singleminded devotion, and spent day and night in muttering and chanting Her name, meditating on Her, and singing songs to Her. Mahārājā Kṛṣṇa Chandra of Nadia, land-lord under Nawab Sirajuddaula of Bengal, heard his enchanting songs on the bank of Gangā when Rāma Prasāda was singing after his evening prayer. Kṛṣṇa Chandra called him to Kṛṣṇanagar, and made him his court poet, like Rāi Guṇākara Bhārat Chandra. He conferred on him the title "Kavirañjana" for his Bengali poetical work "Vidyāsundara" dedicated to him, Rāma Prasāda used to attend his court occasionally. Kṛṣṇa Chandra also was a devotee of Kālī and a disciple of the great scholar and saint—Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamavāgīśa. They were intimately attached to each other, and became personal friends. Kṛṣṇa Chandra granted him thirty three acres of rent-fee land for the maintenance of his family. It is said that Nawab Sirajuddaula was charmed to hear his songs while he was travelling in a boat on the Gaṅgā near Murshidabad where Kṛṣṇa Chandra took him when he went to see the Nawab. Rājā Navakṛṣṇa of Shobhabazar, a Vaiṣṇava, also took Rāma Prasāda to his house on the occasion of the Dole (Holi) festival when the Images of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are swung on a throne. He was enchanted at the sight and composed and sang a song about Kālī swinging on his heart-lotus. He had no disrespect for Vaiṣṇavism.

There was a devout unmarried Vaiṣṇava named Ayodhyā Goswāmi alias Āju Gosain at Kumārhaṭṭa. Mahārāja Kṛṣṇ Chandra invited him and Rāma Prasāda to attend his court. Both could compose songs extempore. The former composed songs condemning the cult of Śakti. The latter composed songs refuting his charge. Some of his songs are answers to Āju Gosain's condemnation. Rāma Prasāda was a devout devotee of Kālī, but did not entertain any disrespect for or antipathy to the cult of Vaiṣṇavism. He composed "Śiva

Kīrtana" and "Kṛṣṇa Kīrtana", and composed songs preaching nondifference between Śiva and Śakti (Kalī, Tārā, or Durgā), Kṛṣṇa and Kālī.

His mother Siddheśvarī used to look after the family. His wife Sarvānī, did all domestic work under her supervision. She was exceedingly fond of her husband, made preparations for his worship, and took her meals after him as was the custom. She never stood in the way of his life, and helped him to the best of her ability despite her hardships. Rāma Prasāda devoted his whole time to the external and mental worship of the Divine Mother. She revealed Herself in flesh and blood as his daughter, Jagadīśvarī, one day while he was mending a fence of his house with her help. She was called by his mother to the inner apartment on some business. After some time she returned and found, to her surprise, that her father completed the work. Rāma Prasāda realised that Kalī revealed Herself as his daughter, and assisted him in mending the fence in the absence of his daughter. The work could not be done without somebody's assistance. He has mentioned this event in a song.

After his mother's death his family fell on evil days. The lands did not yield adequate cropes for want of supervision. The rents were not collected from the tenants who were leaseholders of some lands. Some lands were eroded and engulfed by the Gaṅgā. The members of his family had to face starvation now and then. Rāma Prasāda had two sons, Rāma Dulal and Rāma Mohan, and two daughters, Parameśvarī and Jagadīśvarī. The sons were born later. Rāma Prasāda tried to do his duties to his family conscientiously but was incapacitated from looking after his property due to his innate indifference to worldly affairs and to his mother's affectionate regard for him, and to his wife's excessive love and adoration for him. The poverty of the family was also due to the heriditary generosity of the members. They were ever disposed towards charity to distressed people, and never saved anything against hard times. The only thing Rāma Prasāda could do was to pray to the Divine Mother to save his family from frequent starvation. She heard his prayer,

granted Her grace to him, and took charge of the family. Since then Sarvāni used to get provisions from his tenants, admirers and friends. His family was saved from starvation, although it never enjoyed comforts and affluence.

After Kṛṣṇa Chandra's death Rāma Prasāda broke down in body and mind. He became completely detached from the world, and was always immersed in the consciousness of the Divine Mother permeating the universe and his entire being. He became Her eternal child clasped in her arms every moment. He lived to an old age. His wife predeceased him. He was tended by his son, Rāma Dulal and his daughter-in-law, Bhagavatī in his old age. Bhajahari, a poor blacksmith, his admirer and follower, whom he took into his family, constantly waited upon him. Once on a new moon night Rāma Prasāda worshipped an earthen Image of Kalī in Her temple in the presence of his near and dear ones. Then Bhajahari carried it to the bank of the Gaṅgā. Rāma Prasāda sang songs to Her composed for the occasion, the Image was immersed in the water, and he breathed his last. He had a premonition of his death. Thus ended a sanctified life. His mortal frame was burnt to ashes. His soul was united with the Divine Mother.

He was a born poet, singer, and child of the Divine Mother. His songs inspired the saints, Kamalākānta, Rāma Kṛṣṇa and Bāma Kṣepā, and millions of the people of Bengal. Bengali language is the richer for his songs, which will ever remain a living source of inspiration.

His songsare the spontaneous expressions of his deep devotion and love for the Divine Mother, and exhibit his various moods and attitudes towards Her in his particular environments. They show his struggles with hardships and privations, his service as a clerk, his monthly pension, his mud hut and fence, Kṛṣṇ Chandra's patronage, and other events of his life. They show his inner struggle with evil dispositions and passions, ups and downs in his mystic life, his faith in, devotion to, love for, the Divine Mother, his complete self-surrender and self-dedication to Her, his taking refuge with Her, and invoking Her grace. Some of his songs are expressions of his humility,

servitude, supplication, entreaty to the Divine Mother. But many of them express his firm conviction that she will grant him beatitude, his perfect self-possession, his perfect certitude that he has achieved life eternal even in his embodied life. He was assured of his eternal presence in Her kingdom.

He worshipped Her as formed (sākāra) and qualified (saguṇa), and realised Her as formess (nirākāra) and unqualified (nirguṇa). Her spiritual form (chinmaya rūpa) was revealed to him in an Image, in the universe, in every creature, and in his body as Kuṇḍalinī, dormant and fully awake. He realised identity in different forms of the Divine Being, Śiva, the impersonal Absolute, Śakti, the personal Divine Power or Will, Kṛṣṇa, God of love, and Rādhā, God's power of love (hlādinī śakti). He realised the identity of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu and Kālī. He realised the identity of Moses, Jesus Christ, and Chaitanya, as incarnations (avatāra) of God. Thus, he paved the way for Rāma Kṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa's realisation of the harmony of all religions.

THE CULT OF SHAKTI

Siva.—Lakṣmana Deśikendra quotes from authoritative Śākta works about the nature of Śiva. "Śiva is transcendent of guṇas—sattva, rajas and tamas (nirguṇa), and immanent in them (saguṇa). As transcendent He is devoid of relation to the guṇas of prakṛti." "He is eternal, ubiquitous, subtle, and devoid of modification, and pain. He is eternal bliss and witness (sākṣin)" (PS). He is inactive, calm, unborn, imperishable, unaging, immortal, unmanifest, unknowable, immovable, stable, and transcendent of the guṇas. He is of the nature of truth, knowledge and bliss, self-aware, eternal, stainless, partless, and incomprehensible by the intellect (buddhi). He is the Supreme Brahman residing in the heart" (MBh.). "Śiva, the Lord of all, with His Divine Power (śakti) is nondifferent from Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Rudra,—the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer. He pervades the universe, and assumes the forms of different objects through His Śakti" (ŚT. I, 6; PD., p. 9). Śiva devoid of Śakti cannot create, preserve, and destroy the universe. "Śakti, Supreme Divine Power, non-different from Śiva, issued from Him, and created the universe" (VS.). Śakti contained the seeds of all created beings. Śiva is by nature transcendent of the guṇas and immanent in them in the sense of being invested with divine power (śakti) according to Śāktaism. The Advaita Vedānta wrongly holds that the unqualified and indeterminate Brahman becomes qualified and determinate being associated with cosmic nescience (māyā). Māyā is unreal for idealistic monism. But Divine Power is real. Śiva is the Absolute and of the nature of manifestation (prakāśa) only. He cannot create the universe without His Power (Śakti) of the nature of 'I'-consiousness (vimarśa) and creative bliss.

Parama Śiva is the transcendent, self-revealing, infinite, undifferntiated, consciousness (chit). Śakti, Divine Power, is His aspect inseparable and non-different from Him. He is the quiescent, static, impersonal or suprapersonal, Absolute. But Śakti is the personal, active, dynamic, God invested with 'I'-conciousness, knowledge, will and action as essential attributes and powers. Śakti is feminine in Sanskrit, and is so called Divine Mother. The universe is the expression of Her free will. Śiva is indifferent to the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe. Śakti creates, maintains, and dissolves it. She is the cause of bondage and liberation of the individual souls (jīvātman). She projects the universe of phenomenal appearances through māyā, and entangles the individual souls in embodied life by veiling their spiritual nature by avidyā or ignorance. Parama Śiva is called Śūnya, because He transcends all phenomenal appearances, and because He is unqualified and predicateless. Bindu, dynamic consciousness, was created out of static universal consciousness—Parama Śiva. Śiva and Śakti are not distinguished from each other in Bindu. Point (bindu) is their equilibrium. The subtle sounds (śabda) and physical objects (artha) were created by Bindu, that was the ultimate self-luminous reality with the wave of its manifestation. Śiva and Śakti are not two supreme realities, but are the two aspects of the Supreme Reality—the Brahman. They are not two Deities but one Divine Being, impersonal-personal, static-dynamic, transcendent-immanent (YH., 1,9-11, pp. 15-25).

Śiva is the non-spatial, non-temporal, transcendent, indescribable, incomprehensible, formless, partless, indeterminate, non-dual, Supreme Reality of the nature of infinite bliss. He is supremely beautiful. He is the supreme light of consciousness residing in the hearts of all creatures as their Supreme Self (paramātman), and transcends their waking state, dream, deep sleep, and trance (turīya). He is self-manifest and self-aware (YH, YHD., 1, 35, 49-50).

Shakti—The cult of Śakti is as old as the Vedas. The "Devīsūkta" describes the nature of the Devi, Divine Mother in the following manner. Devī is of the nature of existence-consciousness-bliss, and the ubiquitous, Supreme Self, and Goddess. She is the Sovereign of the universe, and resides in it as its ground. She is the Inner Controller of heaven, earth and hell, manifests them at Her will, and dwells in them as the immutable, neutral, infinite consciousness. She is the material cause of the universe and its elements. She makes an individual self (jīvātman) enter a body, and makes it breathe, eat, see, hear, etc, as its Inner Controller. She creates embodied souls, high and low, gods and goddesses, and gives them bondage and liberation, prosperity and adversity, heaven or hell, sustains and protects them, and instructs them in the highest knowledge of the Brahman. She is the receiver of all sacrifices (yajña) and worship (1—8).

The "Chaṇḍī," Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, gives the following account of the nature of Devī. She is the Supreme Divine Mother, the ground of the universe, and its creator, maintainer, and destroyer. She is the abode of contradictory qualities. She is the most beautiful and the most terrific. She is the Supreme Knowledge (mahāvidyā) and the supreme māyā or cosmic nescience (mahāmāyā)—inducer of ignorance (avidyā) and delusion (moha), the Supreme Goddess and the power of demons, the protector of the virtuous persons and gods and the persecutor of the vicious persons and demons, the grantor of covetable boons and the giver of deardful punishments, the cause of bondage and release. She generates delusion in a person, veils his knowledge of his real nature as an eternal spirit, and causes his attachment to his body and the like. She removes his delusion and ignorance, gives him real knowledge, and grants him release through Her grace. She is Durgā—the boat to cross the impassable ocean of birth and death with. She is Lakṣmī—the goddess of prosperity. She is Sarasvatī—the goddess of learning and the knowledge of the Śāstras. She is possessed of inconceivable prowess and

omnipotence and yet compassionate to Her devotees and cruel to their persecutors. She is gentle and grim, good and terrible, doer of good and evil. She is the grantor of good, prosperity, accomplishment (siddhi), and beautitude. She is dark because She assumes the form of cosmic nescience. She is smoky because She induces delusion in individual souls and entangles them in bondage. She assumes the form of Kālī for the destruction of demons. She destroys the miseries of those who take refuge in Her. She is the refuge and support of the helpless and the supportless. She is fond of Her devotees and bestows Her grace on them who take refuge in Her. She is eternal, and yet appears on earth for the protection of godly persons (deva) and for the persecution of the demoniac persons (asura). She is the well-wisher of all beings in the three worlds. She is the creator of essence (sattva), energy (rajas), and inertia (tamas), and the material cause of the universe. She is the creator of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Rudra, and the power that sustains all being and non-being. She is of the nature of subtle sounds, the ground of the Vedas—Rk, Sāma and Yajus, and of the various arts and crafts which are the means of livelihood, and the destroyer of the miseries of the world. Her grace (kṛpā) is the real cause of release (1, 48-52, 57-58, 63, 67-73, 77-80 ; iV, 7, 9-11, 16-17, 22, 40 ; V, 9-13, 116 ; Xi, 3-12, 22-24, 29-31, 33-35 ; Xiii, 2-5, 14).

The Śākta Tantras describe the nature of Śakti in the following manner. Supreme Śakti is Parama Śiva's power of 'I'-consciousness (vimarśa) full of supreme bliss and homogeneous with Him of the nature of manifestation (prakāśa) (cp. ŚD., i, 3-4 ; iii, 2.) The power of infinite consciousness (chitśakti) creates the world under the supervision of Him. Parā Śakti, Supreme Divine Power, is non-different from Him, and is manifested in all processes of the world. Śiva is like a lamp of the nature of manifestation. He knows Himself when He is reflected in His Śakti. Śakti, His power of 'I'-consciousness (ahantā), is like a ray. She is naturally formless and indeterminate. But when She assumes

the form of the universe, She is differentiated as knowers, valid knowledge, means of valid knowledge, and objects of such knowledge. She contracts and limits Herself, and Śiva also contracts and limits Himself. Creation is limitation of Śiva-Śakti of the nature of the powers of knowledge, will and action. The power of 'I'-consciousness is modified into the world consisting of thirty six principles (tattva). Śiva is the substratum of Her manifestation as the world, which is non-different from Her in a causal, unmanifest, and subtle state during dissolution, and in an effected, manifest, and gross state after creation (YH. YHD., 1, 50-52).

Supreme Divine Power (parā śakti) is the creator of subtle sounds (vāk) and objects (artha). Parama Śiva is the Ātman or Brahman. His supreme power is manifested in the form of Logos,—speech (vāk). At first speech is extremely subtle (parā). Then it becomes less subtle, and is called paśyantī. Then it becomes less subtle, and is called madhyamā. Then it becomes articulate, and is called vaikharī. The Divine Power or Mother is modified into sounds and names and the objects signified by them. Her power of will (ichchhāśakti) exists in the form of paśyantī vāk· Her power of knowledge (jñānaśakti) exists in the form of madhaymā vāk. Her power of action (kriyāśakti) exists in the form of vaikharī vāk, which assumes the forms of physical objects (YH., YHD., i, 36-40; ii, 19-20, 24-25).

Kulakundalini (Serpent Power)—Śakti, Śiva's power, or Divine Mother with the powers of knowledge, will and action lies in the Mūlādhāra lotus like a sleeping serpent at the base of the Suṣumnā in the spinal cord. She resides in the Mūlādhāra, the Anāhata, the Ājñā, and the Brahmarandhra lotuses. Residing in the first lotus She is called Kuṇḍalinī. Residing in the second lotus She is called Haṁsa. Residing in the third lotus She is called Bindu. Residing in the fourth lotus She is called formless, transcendental consciousness (SS., YHD., i, 42, p. 59). She is all-pervasive consciousness (chaitanya) and eternal bliss unlimited by time, space, form

and causality. She assumes the form of the universe in the proximity of Śiva. The Supreme Divine Power (parā śakti) becomes superior (parā) prakṛti in the form of individual souls (jīva) and inferior (aparā) prakṛti in the form of ether, air, fire, water, earth, manas, budhi, and ahaṁkāra (BG., Vii, 4-5). She assumes the forms of individual souls and the world. She is full of all gods and goddesses. She is full of all mantras. She assumes the form of Śabdabrahma, and is full of fifty letters called mātṛkā or mother. She permeates all principles (tattva), and is subtle and incomprehensible. She is the seed of all mantras and the universe. She is the Supreme Goddess. She creates prakṛti and puruṣa (ST., i, 51-57 & 62, PD., YŚU., p. 467, Varāha Up., p. 615 ; YKU., p. 556). She ought to be meditated on as non-different from Śiva, roused from Her sleep, made to pierce the higher lotuses, and united with Parama Śiva in the Sahasrāra or Binduchakra, and brought down to the Mūlādhāra lotus (DG., iV, 33, 48-49 & 51, pp. 192-94). A yogin should open the door to liberation (mokṣa-dvāra) through Kuṇḍalinī (DBU., 68, p. 289). The individual soul should meditate on itself as a spirit in the heart-lotus, on Kuṇḍalinī in the Mūlādhāra lotus, and on the Supreme Self or Parama Śiva in the Sahasrāra. It should be united with Parama Śiva by rousing Kuṇḍalini and making Her pierce the higher lotuses and ascend to the highest lotus (TS., p. 73). It cannot be united with Him or become indentical with Him without the aid of Kuṇḍalinī. She is the mediator between the jīvātman and Parama Śiva, although She is non-different from Him. Kuṇḍalinī, coiled Divine Power, or dormant power of universal consciousness (chitśakti) exists everywhere in the universe. Matter, life, mind, and superconsciousness are different degrees of the unveiling of the dormant power of consciousness. Even in an atom of matter there is coiled Kuṇḍalinī in the nucleus. Matter is dormant power of consciousness (CHI., first edition, p. 183. Cp. "Lights on yoga," pp. 16-18, 5-8 ; "More Lights

on Yoga", p. 16). Divine Power assumes the forms of the individual souls by limiting Herself, and of matter by coiling Herself or by becoming dormant. Jīva Gosvāmi, a Vaiṣṇava, on the other hand, holds that God (Kṛṣṇa) has three distinct powers : (I) essential powers of being, consciousness and bliss (svarūpaśakti), (2) intermediate power of finite consciousness (jīvaśakti), and (3) inferior power of insentience (māyāśakti). Matter is māyāśakti. Individual souls are jīvaśakti. They are God's inessential powers. Powers of infinite being (sandhinī), infinite knowledge (samvit, chit), and infinite bliss (hlādinī) are His essential powers. God, souls, and matter are three distinct entities ("Sarvasamvādinī," p. 61 ; BS., 17 ; cp. "Lights on yoga" pp. 24-25).

Shakti, Nada and Bindu.—From the qualified (saguṇa) Śiva with the wealth of being-knowledge-bliss Śakti or Divine Power issued forth. "At the will of Śiva His Supreme Power, eternal, ubiquitous, and non-different from Him came out" (VS.). She was of form of being-knowledge-bliss, and the substratum of all principles (tattva). She was made manifest by the qualified Śiva. Nāda was produced out of Śakti. Biudu was produced out of Nāda. "Śiva endowed with Supreme Power Himself became threefold : Śakti, Nāda, and Bindu. Bindu is of the nature of Śiva. Nāda springs from the union of Śiva and Śakti" (ŚT., i, 7-9, p. 10). "Divine Power under the influence of Śiva is capable of creation" (PS.). "She in the proximity of Śiva, the supreme light of consciousness, desirous of creation, became condensed, and acquired the nature of Bindu." "The supreme Divine Power, non-different from Śiva, all-pervasive, partless, supreme power of consciousness, desirous of creation, became Bindu with the predominance of the power of action." (PD., i, 7). Śiva was the agitator, Śakti was agitated, and Nāda sprang out of their union. Raudrī issued out of Bindu ; Jyeṣṭhā, out of Nāda ; and Vāmā, out of Śakti. Out of them Rudra, Brahmā, and Viṣṇu issued ; they were of the

nature of knowledge, volition, and action respectively. An unmanifest sound was produced out of effected Bindu, called Śabdabrahma. Lakṣmaṇa Deśikendra regards Sabdabrahma as the consciousness (caitanya) existing in all created beings (ŚT., i, 8-13, pp. 10-11). Bhartṛhari regards the eternal Brahman as Śabdabrahma. The Śāktas regard the Divine Mother (Devī) as assuming the form of Śabdabrahma, (PS., PD., i, 13, p. 11). She assumes the form of Kuṇḍalinī in the human body, and is expressed as sounds represented by letters. From Śiva in the from of Bindu associated with time all-pervasive Sadāśiva, the Witness of the universe, was born. Then Iśa was born out of Sadāśiva. Rudra was born out of Iśa. Then Viṣṇu was born. Then Brahmā was born (ŚT., i, 14-16, pp. 12-13).

Creation—"The Prapañchasāra Tantra" gives the following account of creation. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer of the universe are created by Akṣara. They are modified by it, and dissolved in it. Prakṛti and Puruṣa are eternal. The former envelopes the the universe. Time (kāla) produces changes in Prakṛti with Her three guṇas—sattva, rajas, and tamas. She is conscious of Herself (svasaṁvedyā) and called Pradhāna Śakti. She transcends Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. She knows Herself as supreme, and has no other knower. She becomes conscious in contact with Puruṣa or supreme light of universal consciousness. She desires to create, thickens and becomes Bindu. This Bindu is causal Bindu. The causal Bindu divides itself through the instrumentality of time into the supreme, subtle, and gross states. They are called effected Bindu (kārya bindu), nāda, and bīja. Nāda is Bindu as causal action. When causal Bindu divides itself, an inarticulate sound (avyakta rava) called Śabdabrahma is produced. From it Mahat or Buddhi or cosmic egoism (ahaṁkāra) is produced. Ahaṁkāra is threefold : bhūtādi, vaikārika and taijasa. Tamas predominates in the first ; rajas, in the second ; and sattava, in the third. From bhūtādi through Śakti with

guṇas agitated by time sound-essence (śabda tanmātra) is produced. From sound-essence ether is produced ; from ether, air ; from air, fire ; from fire, water ; from water, earth. From rājasa ahaṁkāra five motor organs, viz., vocal organs, hands, legs, anus, and generative organ are produced. From sāttvika ahaṁkāra five cognitive organs, viz., ears, skin, eyes, tongue, and nose are produced. The four internal organs, manas, buddhi, ahaṁkāra, and chitta are produced from sāttvika ahaṁkāra. Mūlaprakṛti is called Prakṛti, the root-evolvent. Five elements, ten sense-organs, and mind (manas) are the sixteen modifications (vikāra). Prakṛti (avayakta), Mahat, Ahaṁkāra, and five subtle essences (tanmātra) are the evolvents (prakṛti). The last seven are the modifications of Prakṛti. The universe is constituted by sattva, rajas and tamas and their modifications. Śabdabrahma is undefinable by speech and intelligible to itself (svasaṁvedya). The "Prapañchasāra Tantra" is ascribed to Śaṁkara (i, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26-28, 40-46, 52-53, 55, 57 & 60., edited by Arthur Avalon, Calcutta, 1914). It accepts the Sāṁkhya cosmology with a theistic background, and regards Puruṣa as Śiva of the other Tantras, and Śiva the Destroyer of the universe.

The Individual Self (jivatman).—The individual self is bound to embodied life and called paśu. It is deluded by ignorance (avidyā) created by māyā, cosmic nescience, and experiences joys and griefs. Māyā assumes the form of Mūlaprakṛti composed of sattva, rajas and tamas for its enjoyments and sufferings. The body of the embodied self is sustained by five vital forces. Avidyā veils the real nature of the individual self as the supreme Spirit or Śiva, and produces its attachment to the body and wife, children, property and the like. It produces the false sense of 'I' and 'mine,' or egoism (ahaṁkāra). The Ignorance (avidyā) produces desires and actions. Right actions produce merits, and wrong actions produce demerits. Merits and demerits are potencies of actions (karma). Avidyā constitutes the causal body

bound by aṇu and karma are called mixed (miśra). Those souls which are bound by aṇu only are called pure (śuddha). They are called sakala, pralayākala, and vijñanakevala respectably. Bhāskarāraya gives this account of the nature of the bonds and the classes of souls. The Śaivas also admit these three classes of souls. (YH., ii,43 ; YHS., p. 142 ; cp. PH., p. 119).

Amṛtānandayogī describes the nature of these kinds of souls in the following manner after the author of "Svacchanda-saṁgraha." Impure souls are bound by aṇu, karma and māyā, embodied, ignorant of the nature of Śiva, and possessed of the knowledge of difference only. They are devoid of the contemplation of the truth 'I am Śiva ; always attached to external objects, engaged in actions, and experience joys and sorrows as fruits of their past actions. They are called sakala, and worthy of being purified of their impurities. The mixed souls are those which have aready experienced the fruits of their past actions by undergoing births in different species, which are related to their subtle bodies only, which receive the grace of Śiva without the aid of a Master (guru), and which are made Lords of the elements in order to wear off their remaining potencies. They are called pralayākala. The pure souls are those which are bound by aṇu only, which are devoid of karma and māyā, and which know that Śiva is the only reality. They are called vijñānakevala (SS., YHD., ii, 43, pp. 140-42 ; TS., p. 44).

Master (guru) and Disciple.—A person of good parentage, of pure disposition, possessed of sense-control, proficient in all Āgamas, well-versed in all Śastras, benevolent to others, truthful, tranquil, efficient in the repetition of a Divine name or mantra, worship and meditation, and prepossessing in appearance, is worthy of becoming a Master or spiritual teacher. A person of good parentage, and of good disposition, engaged in the pursuit of the four ends of human life—wealth, happiness, virtue and liberation, well-read in the

Vedas, efficient, continent, benevolent to animals, respectful and dutiful to the parents, engaged in the performance of his specific duties appropriate to his caste and station in life (svadharma), devoid of conceit of birth, learning, wealth, etc., especially in relation to his superiors, obedient to his spiritual teacher in thought, word and deed, endowed with faith in God and future life, and abandoning the company of atheists and non-believers, is worthy of being made a disciple (ŚT., ii, 242-52, pp. 67-69 ; TS., pp., 1-2). Those persons, who are always crooked in their behaviour, disrespectful to the superiors in thought, word and deed, always engaged in the gratification of their passions, arrogant, and indulging in the company of women, are not fit for being accepted as disciples. If a Master makes them disciples, he is vitiated by their sins. Similarly, a Master should be discarded, if he does not discriminate between right and wrong, if he lives an immoral life, and if he is puffed up with pride. But a qualified Master should be respected in thought, word and deed, and his instructions should be followed in the pursuit of liberation, and his guidance should be sought at crises in the course of spiritual practices (sādhanā). If God is displeased, a Master can save an aspirant ; but if a Master is displeased with him, there is none to save him (YHS., i, 4, pp. 7-10.)

In reality, Śiva, the Supreme Self, is the real Master. He manifests Himself through a competent human teacher to a worthy person when he is spiritually fit for being initiated in a mantra and instructed in a proper spiritual discipline. A human teacher is only an instrument through whom Śiva reveals His power to a receptive soul. Hence a Master should be revered by a disciple like God. He should make no distinction between them. To look upon a Master as a mere human being is a sin. The meaning of a mantra is not revealed to a person, and his tutelary Deity is not experienced by him, if he is devoid of devotion for his Master and the Deity (Śvet. Up., vi, 23 ; YH., ii, 49 ; YHD., pp. 154-55 ; ch. BS., 282-83 ; PH., p. 66 ; "More Lights on Yoga" p. 73 ; VSSV., ii, 6, 27.)

Brahman in māyā. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and gracious to all. The individual soul is a reflection of Śiva in avidyā. Iśvara is the presiding Deity of the causal state of māyā. Sūtrātman is the presiding Deity of the subtle state of prakṛti. Virāt is the presiding Deity of the gross universe. Similarly, the individual soul limited by the causal body of avidyā is called prājña. The individual soul limited by the subtle body is called taijasa. The individual soul limited by the gross body is called viśva (DG., i, 47-48, p. 181 ; iii, 27-28, p. 188). When the gross body, the subtle body, and the causal body are destroyed, only the Ātman, Brahman, Śiva, or universal consciousness remaiṅs. On the destruction of the threefold body, the limiting adjunct (upādhi), the individual self (jīva) becomes the Supreme Self (Śiva) (Ibid, iii, 29-30, p. 188).

The gross body is called the bodily sheath (annamaya kośa). The vital forces which sustain the body constitute the vital sheath (prāṇamaya kośa). The manas with its modes—desire, anger etc., constitutes the mental sheath (manomaya kośa). The reflection of universal consciousness in avidyā or its product, the internal organ is the intelligent sheath (vijñānamaya kośa). It is the empirical self, which is a knower, enjoyer and doer. The reflection of universal bliss in the internal organ is the blissful sheath (ānandamaya kośa). The universal bliss (bimba) which is reflected in the internal organ is the Ātman, Brahman or Śiva (Pañchadaśi, iii, 2-10). The individual self should gradually transcend the five sheaths and identify itself with the universal bliss or Śiva.

Karma and Transmigration.—The performance of righteous actions produces merits (puṇya, dharma). The performance of unrighteous actions produces demerits (pāpa, adharma). Merits and demerits are the potencies of actions (karma). They are the qualities of the internal organ, which is produced by individual nescience (avidyā). They are not the qualities of the individual self (jīvātman), which, in its real nature, is eternal Spirit. Merits produce pleasure and

happiness. Demerits produce pain and misery. This is called the Law of Karma. The Divine mother creates the universe in conformity with the individual souls' merits and demerits (karma) which are unseen agencies (adṛṣṭa). Until they produce their fruits which are experienced by the embodied souls with their merits and demerits, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth continues. Transmigration is the inevitable consquence of the Law of karma. After millions of births in different species, an individual soul assumes a human body.

Merits and demerits accumulated by an individual soul in the past births, with which it is born, are called sañchita karma. Those of the accumulated karmans, which have ripened and begun to fructify in this birth, are called prārabdha karma. Those which are being acquired in this birth are called sanchīyamāna karma. Those which will mature and bear fruits in a future birth are called āgāmi karma. They are all consumed by the intuitive knowledge (jñāna) of the identity of the jīvātman with Brahman.

Bonds.—Bound souls are called paśus. Bonds are called pāśas in Śāktaism and Śaivaism both. Bonds are of three kinds : (1) aṇu, (2) karma, and (3) māyā. Aṇu is ignorance (ajñāna). It is of two kinds, viz., (i) the absence of knowledge of the individual self as of the nature of consciousness and (ii) the false knowledge of the non-self such as the body and the like as the self. These two together constitute the impurity called aṇu (aṇava mala). Aṇu is so called because it limits the unlimited Ātman. Karma is the cause of a body. It is an unseen potency (adṛṣṭa) produced by voluntary actions. It is of two kinds, viz., merit (puṇya) and demerit (pāpa). Merit is produced by right actions enjoined by the scriptures. Demerit is produced by wrong actions prohibited by them. Māyā is the knowledge of one self or Ātman as many selves and objects. Śiva is the only Ātman. Those souls which are bound by the three kinds of bonds are called impure (aśuddha). Those souls which are

(kāraṇadeha). Merits and demerits are desposited in the subtle body (sūkṣmadeha). They lead the individual self to heaven and hell respectively, and make it assume a body again on earth to wear off other unseen potencies of action. Thus the wheel of birth and death goes on. It ceases when the Ignorance (avidyā) is burnt by the immediate knowledge of Śiva-Śakti or Brahman to be its real nature. This saving knowledge can be acquired through the performance of duties (karma) and devotion (bhakti) by the grace of the Divine Mother. It is facilitated by meditation (yoga) (YH, ii, 63, SS., YHD., i, 61, pp. 165-66). Paramātman resides in the hearts of all creatures as their Inner Controller (antaryāmin) (YHS., ii, 62, p. 170).

Māyā is the knowledge of difference among the apparent parts of Śiva and all creatures, limits His omnipotence, and makes Him limited in His powers. It is the principle of individuation and expression (Saubhāgya-subhagodaya, YHD. ii, 34, p. 124). Higher knowledge (śuddha vidyā) is the knowledge of non-difference between 'I' and 'this' (Ibid). Māyā is the cause of bondage. Śuddha vidyā is the cause of liberation. Here 'māyā' is taken as avidyā.

Māyā is cosmic nescience. It has the power of projecting a world of false appearances (vikṣepa) and (2) the power of veiling the real nature of Brahman (āvaraṇa). The former creates the difference between self and not-self, Brahman and the world, while the latter creates bondage to embodied existence subject to time, space and causality (SRU., op. cit., 17-19). An embodied self (jīva) is attributed to the Witness Self (sāksin). It is the empirical selfdue to the reflection of Śiva or Brahman in the internal organ (antaḥkaraṇa). It is a false appearance of Him due to attribution. When the veil due to avidyā is destroyed, it experiences its identity with Him. Śiva, Brahman, or Ātman united with a subtle body is the empirical self (Ibid, 20-22).

The individual self (jīvātman) resides in the heart-lotus as a luminous spiritual monad (DBU., p. 290). It has four

states : waking, dream, deep sleep, and trance (turīya). The waking state is produced by the external cognitive and motor sense-organs supervised by the internal organs. Dreams are produced by the four internal organs—manas, buddhi, ahaṁkāra and citta. Deep sleep is produced by the individual self only (Śārīraka Up., p. 454). These states have their seats in the different parts of the heart-lotus (Haṁsa Up., p. 147). The individual self resides in the Mūlādhāra lotus also (YŚU., V, 5, p. 467).

Manas, buddhi, ahaṁkāra, and chitta are the four internal organs. They are the different aspects of the internal organ. Indecision and decision are the functions of manas. Determinate knowledge is the function of buddhi. Memory is the function of chitta. Self-sense is the function of ahaṁkāra (DG., i, 36-38, p. 180). Indeterminate consciousness is said to be the function of chitta (ŚT., PD., i, 37, p. 19).

Five sense-organs of knowledge, five sense-organs of action, five vital forces—prāṇa, apāna, samānā, vyāna, and udāna,—and manas or buddhi constitute the subtle body (sūkṣma deha). Merits and demerits are not the qualities of the individual soul. They are deposited in the subtle body, which is produced by the unquintupled elements. It is the cause of the gross body, which is composed of the five quintupled elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. When a gross body (sthūla deha) dies, the individual soul departs with its subtle body, and may assume another gross body. Avidyā, the individual soul's nescience, a product of cosmic nescience (māyā) constitutes its causal body (kāraṇa deha). It is the cause of its subtle body (DG., ii, 31, 41-42, 46-48).

The gross body is sustained by the vital forces (prāṇa). It is the vehicle of the embodied soul's experience of joys and sorrows due to merits and demerits. It is subject to disease, decay and death (DG., 25). It is acquired by an individual soul due to its potencies of actions (karma) for appropriate enjoyments and sufferings.

Sattva predominates in māyā. Avidyā contains sattva, rajas and tamas. Iśvara, Lord, is the reflection of Śiva or

Initiation (diksa).—Śiva, the Supreme Self, and Master are non-different from each other. Śiva is the incomprehensible, indescribable, indeterminate, nondual, Supreme Reality. He is transcendent of all principles (tattva). He is the real Master of all souls. A human Master is His instrument in setting a bound soul (paśu) on the path to liberation. He is proficient in the Śāstras, virtuous, and firmly established on the way to liberation. He initiates a bound soul in a mantra, awakens his dormant Divine power, and instructs him in a spiritual discipline for which he is spiritually fit. Śiva initiates a person through a human teacher. He is the means and the end. An aspirant should meditate on non-difference of his self from his Master and Śiva. He acquires an intuitive experience of this non-difference and the saving knowledge of one non-dual Ātman or Śiva as the ultimate fruit of such meditation (YH., YHD., ii, 49, pp. 154-55 ; cp. BSSV., iii, 28).

A person, who is ignorant of the nature of Śiva, and who has not experienced the Deity signified by a mantra by undergoing appropriate spiritual discipline, is not worthy of being a Master. A person, who is not self-controlled, virtuous, receptive, humble, and in quest of liberation, is not fit to be a disciple. A Master initiates a person in a mantra charged with spiritual power, transmits his spiritual power partly to him, and instructs him in the methods of worship, prayer, and meditation. A disciple should have faith, devotion, aspiration, vigilance, determination, and steadfast endeavour. He shonld practise spiritual culture throughout life according to the instructions of his Master (cp. Bhāg., xi, 17, 27 ; vii, 15, 26-27; iv, 30 & 38 ; BS., 213). Initiation is necessary for entering upon a spiritual discipline. "Dīkṣā is so called, because it destroys all sins, and because it generates the saving knowledge of God. Hence an aspirant should dedicate his all to his Master, and be initiated in a mantra" (BS., 282). All are eligible for initiation according to Śāktaism provided they are morally fit and spiritually inclined.

Mantra.—A mantra is so called because it liberates an embodied soul from bondage on being reflected upon. It is a ray of light of transcendental consciousness (chinmarīchi). It is not insentient, material, and unconscious. It is spiritual. All mantras are embedded in the foundational knowledge (vidyā). They are due to the union of Śiva and Śakti (YH., ii, 1, p. 90). They constitute the spiritual forms of the Deities. They are not creations of human beings but revealed to the sages and seers (ṛṣi). The different mantras were revealed to different seers (mantradraṣṭṛ), and handed down from them to their disciples (YH., YHD., YHS., ii, pp. 90-190 ; cp. VSSV., ii, 1, 4-7; BSSV, ii, 1, 3 ; ii, 2, 7.)

Mūlavidyā or Devī is modified into sounds (śabda) and objects (artha). Sounds represented by the letters (mātṛkā) are produced out of Śiva's power of 'I'—consciousness (vimarśa-śakti) and sustained by Her. She is non-different from Her mantra. She and Her mantra are of the nature of pure consciousness (chit) as distinguished from mental consciousness or consciousness reflected in mental modes. The supersensible spiritual nature of a mantra is experienced by an aspirant through continual practice of repetition of it over years (YHD, YHS., ii, 28, p. 117). A mantra is so called, because it is the abode of God, because it manifests His spiritual form (rūpa) when it is meditated on for long, and when an aspirant's vital current is permeated with it, and because it is a sign (liṅga) which represents Him (YŚU., ii, 7-8 & 10, p. 463). A mantra without meditation (yoga) is ineffective ; meditation without a mantra is inefficatious.

The Vaiṣṇavas also regard a Divine name or mantra and God as non-different from each other. A mantra embodies Divine Power, and is really composed of pure consciousness and bliss (chidānanda). To regard a Divine name or mantra as a mere insentient sound is a sin. It is spiritual and supersensible, and experienced as such through continual repetition and remembrance of it over years, which undoubtedly generates the realisation of its identity with the

Deity (CCA., ii, ch. 4 ; BRS., 1, 2, 43-44, p. 77 ; BS., 38-36 ; cp. PD., p. 67).

Goods or Ends.—There are four ends of human life : (1) wealth (artha), happiness (kāma), virtue (dharma), and liberation (mokṣa). Wealth is generally pursued as a means of happiness. But it should be pursued by an aspirant (sādhaka) as subservient to virtue and liberation. Wealth for the preservation of life and for intellectual, moral, and spiritual development, and for the maintenance of one's family is in conformity with Dharma. But the acquisition of wealth for the gratification of lower desires and baser passions is repugnant to Dharma. Happiness consists in the fulfiment of desires for earthly enjoyments. Happiness should be pursued in conformity with Dharma. It springs from the harmony of desires with reason and Moral Law. Happiness is either earthly or heavenly. Heavenly happiness is attained by the performance of works enjoined by the scriptures. Dharma is a comprehensive term. It is the Moral Law, the law of social cohesion and harmony, the law of right living (sadāchāra). Dharma consists in performing actions in conformity with the Moral Law, which are approved by our conscience, the scriptures, and the sages. Dharma also means merits produced in the soul by the performance of moral actions. Righteous actions should be performed, and merits (puṇya) should be aquired. Unrighteous actions should not be committed, and demerits (pāpa) should not be acquired. Liberation (mokṣa) is the supreme end. It is release from bondage to embodied life,—wheel of birth and death. It consists in the union of an individual self with the Supreme Self, or the recognition of the identity of the former with the latter.

Five kinds of liberation are generally admitted : (1) sālokya, (2) sāmīpya, (3) sārūpya, (4) sāyujya, and (5) sārṣṭi. Sālokya consists in residing in the abode of God or Deity worshipped. Sāmīpya consists in living in the proximity of God or Deity worshipped. Sārūpya consists in acquiring the form or

qualities of God or Deity worshipped. Sāyujya consists in becoming one with God or Deity worshipped. Sārṣṭi consists in acquiring the sovereignty of God or Deity worshipped. Śāktaism regards the mergence of the individual self in the Supreme Self as the supreme goal of spiritual discipline (sādhanā). It believes in embodied release. A soul devoid of all desires and attachment to external objects can attain liberation in embodied life (jīvanmukti).

Supernatural or Occult Powers (Siddhi).—Concentration of the mind on the Divine Being at the centres of mystical consciousness atteneded with Japa of a mantra or a Divine name, and with meditation produces occult powers incidentally, e. g., the powers of becoming minute (aṇimā), light (laghimā), large (mahimā), reaching remote objects (prāpti), unobstructed fulfilment of desires (prākāmya), and absolute control over physical objects (īśitva), power of subduing others' minds (vaśitva), and power of effectuating all resolutions (kāmāvasāyitva). Sometimes power of becoming heavy (garimā) is stated in place of the last. Clairvoyance, clairaudience, quick movement to distant places, telepathy, thought-transference, etc. are mentioned (ŚT, PD., XXV, 48-49, p. 548 ; PD., i, 88, p. 30 ; YH., iii, 118, p. 277 ; YTU., 73-77, pp. 300-01). They are not the inevitable co-effects of spiritual discipline. They are hindrances rather than achievements, because they thwart an aspirant's spiritual progress if they are utilised for self-glorification or other egoistic purposes. They follow a devotee of the Divine Mother, on whom She bestows Her grace, as servants.

Thirty-six Principles (tattva).—Both monistic Śaivism and Śāktaism admit thirty-six principles (tattva). Parama Śiva is both transcendent of the universe and immanent in it. (1) Śiva-tattva is the first vibration of His creative will. (2) Śaktitattva is the power or energy of Śiva, His creative aspect, of the nature of 'I'-consciousness with creative bliss or delight predominant in it. (3) Sadāśiva-tattva is the will to affirm 'this'-aspect of universal consciousness and assumes

the form 'I am this' in which 'I'-aspect is predominant and 'this' aspect is faint. Will is predominant in this principle. (4) Iśvara-tattva is the definite knowledge of 'this'-aspect of universal consciousness,—clear knowledge of the universe to be created. Knowledge is predominant in this principle. (5) Sadvidyā or Śuddha-vidyā-tattva is the definite knowledge of 'I'-aspect and 'this' aspect of universal experience as equally balanced. The power of action is predominant in it (PH., pp. 7-12). These are called pure (śuddha) principles. They are evolutes of pure (śuddha) māyā or mahāmāyā as contrasted with impure (aśuddha) māyā mentioned below (CHI., pp. 40-41 ; cp. STTS).

(6-11). Māyā and its five products called coverings (kañchūka) are mixed principles. They are neither pure like Śiva-tattava, Śaktitattva, Sadāśiva-tattva, Iśvara-tattva, and Sadvidyā or Śuddha-vidyā-tattva mentioned above nor impure principles, prakṛti and its modifications mentioned below. Māyā limits universal consciousness, and makes the immeasurable measurable, and the indeterminate determinate. It has the power of concealing the nature of Śiva as universal consciousness (āvaraṇaśakti) and the power of projecting the manifold world of appearances (vikṣepaśakti) (SRU., 17-20, p. 647). This māyā is impure (aśuddha) as contrasted with pure (śuddha) māyā mentioned above (cp. STTS).

Five Coverings (Kanchuka) of Siva.—Both Saivaism and Śāktaism admit five coverings of Śiva or universal concious-ness : (1) kalā, (2) vidyā, (3) rāga, (4) kāla, and (5) niyati (PH., p. 52). (1) Kalā limits Śiva's omnipo-tence and generates limitation of His causal efficiency. It is the instrument whereby the ignorance that envelopes the individual souls is partly removed. It evolves into mūla-prakrti on one side and vidyā and rāga on the other. (2) Vidyā limits Śiva's omniscience and generates limitation of His knowledge. It is the instrument activated by Śiva-Śakti, whereby the individual souls acquire knowledge which

is a mode of the unconscious intellect (buddhi). Vidyā is neither wholly pure nor wholly impure. It is an intermediary through the aid of which knowledge of the souls is produced. (3) Rāga limits Śiva's self-fulfilledness and generates His desire for particular objects. It is the instrument activated by Śiva-Śakti, whereby the individual souls acquire attachment which is a mode of the unconscious intellect. Knowledge and attachment are experienced through the aid of the intermediaries, vidyā and rāga which are neither wholly pure nor wholly impure. (4) Kāla or time limits Śiva's eternity and generates temporal distinctions of past, present and future. It is a factor in the operation of causes in producing their effects. Particular seeds germinate in particular seasons. Time is a nonintelligent instrument activated by Śiva-Śakti, whereby the effectution of causes is regulated. (5) Niyati or destiny limits Śiva's freedom and pervasiveness, generates spatial and causal distinctions, and regulates the individual souls' enjoyments and sufferings in conformity with their potencies of actions (karma) or merits and demerits. It is a nonintelligent instrument activated by Śiva-Śakti for regulating the maturation and fructification of the souls' potencies of actions. These are the five coverings or "contractors" of Śiva, which limit His different qualities. They are products of māyā. They have to be removed in order to attain to the perfect state of Śiva (PH., pp. 12-13 ; CHI., first edition, pp. 38-39 & 173 ; cp. STTS).

(12) Śiva limited by māyā and assuming the five coverings (kañchūka) becomes an individual subject (puruṣa). Any sentient being is a puruṣa whose knowledge and power are limited. A puruṣa is a spiritual monad (aṇu) as distinguished from a spatial point because of the limitation of knowledge and power.

(13) Prakṛti is the objective manifestation of the 'I am this' experience of Śuddhavidyā while puruṣa is its subjective manifestation. Prakṛti is the equilibrium of sattava, rajas and tamas which are the gross forms of Śiva's powers of

knowledge, will and action, respectively. Prakṛti is His Śakti. Puruṣa is the experiencer while prakṛti is the experienced.

(14-16). Buddhi, ahaṁkāra, and manas are the evolutes of prakṛti. Prakṛti evolves into cosmic intellect (buddhi) which is modified into cosmic egoism (ahaṁkāra). Cosmic egoism is modified into individual manas, buddhi, ahaṁkāra, and chitta (vide ante). The last three are different forms of manas—the principal internal organ.

(17-26). Cosmic egoism (ahaṁkāra) is modified into five cognitive sense-organs—olfactory organ, gustatory organ, visual organ, tactual organ, and auditory organ. It is modified into five motor sense-organs—vocal organ, prehensive organ, locomotive organ, excretory organ, and generative organ. The sense-organs are really powers which operate through the sense-orifices.

(27-36). Cosmic egoism is modified into five tanmātras or subtle essences of sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell. These five tanmātras are modified into five gross elements—ether, air, fire, water, and earth, respectively (PH., pp. 12-15 ; CHI., Vol. II, pp. 36-37 ; cp. STTS). These are impure principles (aśuddha-tattva).

Worship (puja).—The worship of Divine Mother should be performed every day. It is of three kinds : (1) the highest (parā), (2) the intermediate (parā-parā), and the lowest (aparā). (1) The worship of the nondual power of Śiva, established in Her greatness, without offerings of flowers and other articles is the highest. It is mental worship consisting in the contemplation of Divine Mother as undifferentiated power of pure consciousness and bliss. (2) The worship of Her consisting in the absorption of the mind in Her abode in meditation in which there is the knowledge of the distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped is the intermediate form of worship. (3) The worship of Her in the form of a mystic diagram (yantra) or an Image in which the knowledge of the above distinction is prominent

is the lowest. It is an external act of worship with flowers, fruits and other articles as an aid to manifest the consciousness of nondual Divine Power. Even the wise should perform it as subsidiary to the higher forms of worship. The extroverts who cannot concentrate their minds on the abstract concept of nondual dynamic consciousness-bliss should worship a diagram or an Image with the mind fixed on the Divine Being without thinking it to be a mere symbol, because a symbol is realy the Divine Power and composed of pure consciousness and bliss (chidānanda). This act spiritualises the physical act of worship and the physical objects used in it. An Image (vigraha) and the essence (svarūpa) of the Divine Being are nondifferent form each other because they are spiritual (CCA. ii,17). A yantra is a mystic diagram representing the Divine Being and the universe. It is either engraven on a metal or drawn on paper and worshipped like an Image. The highest kind of worship is full of knowledge while the lowest kind of it is full of works. The intermediate kind of it partakes of both because the mind is fixed on the identity of the worshipper with a diagram or an Image in it. It is a daily obligatory duty (nitya karma). It is not motivated by a desire for earthly or heavenly happiness (kāmya karma). Nor is it an occasional duty (naimittika karma) appropriate to particular occasions (eg., solar eclipse, lunar eclipse, etc). It culminates in the knowledge of nondual power of consciousness-bliss. The highest kind of worship is devoid of the experience of duality and difference. The lowest kind of it is devoid of the experience of nonduality and non-difference. The intermediate kind of it is external worship in which efforts are made to destroy the experience of duality and difference. In the highest kind of worship, there is the experience of a part of infinite existence-consciousness-bliss in the cognitions of all objects produced by the external sense-organs, and there is no experience of concrete objects. The consciousness of the Divine Being is manifested through the sense-organs and the internal organs. The

non-difference between the worshipping self and the Divine Being of the nature of undifferentiated existence-consciousness-bliss is manifested in it. It consists in consuming all detrminations (vikalpa) in the sacrificial fire of Śiva of the nature of manifestation (prakāśa), and of Śakti of the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarśa) nondifferent from Śiva (YH., YHD., iii, 2, pp. 191-92 ; YHS., iii, 2-4, pp. 193-94).

The worship of an Image (pratimā) requires the following : (1) the seat of an Image (āsana), (2) welcome (svāgata), (3) water for washing the feet (pādya), (4) offering unboiled rice, flowers, sandal paste, and dūrvā grass to the Divine Mother in a vessel (arghya), (5) water for sipping (āchamana,) (6) a brass cup containing honey, ghee, milk and curd (madhuparka), (7) emblic myrobalan fruit (āmalaka), (8) water for bathing (snāna); (9) cloth (vastra), (10) ornaments (ābharaṇa), (11) scent, e.g. sandal paste (gandha), (12) flowers (puṣpa), (13) incense (dhūpa), (14) a lamp (dīpa), (15) food (naivedya), and (16) prayer (vandanā) and obeisance (namaskāra) (TS., p. 81). Sometimes bael leaves, lotuses, etc., soaked in ghee are burnt in a sacrificial fire (yajña) with the utterance of mantras. Sometimes he-goats, rams, and male buffalo calves are sacrificed as substitutes for lust, anger, greed and other passions. This practice is dying out. Sugar canes and gourds are cut into two pieces for animals. Oblations to a sacrificial fire and animal sacrifice are not indispensable for the external worship of Divine Mother (PD., iii, 93 ff, pp. 156 ff.).

Worship is preceded by purification of the place of worship and purification of the elements of the body by uniting them with the Divine Being (TS., p. 73). Worship is preceded by invoking the rays of transcendental consciousness (chinmarīchi) from the Deities in the body, spiritualising it, and making it fit for worship. There is a saying : "A non-Śiva cannot worship Śiva" (TS., pp. 72-76).

Mental worship is superior to external worship. They are not exclusive of each other. An aspirant may perform

external worship at some time and mental worship at some other time. They strengthen each other. He is enjoined to rise at dawn, purify himself, meditate on Kuṇḍalinī at the Mulādhāra lotus, the subtle power of cosmic consciousness resembling a coiled sleeping serpent, kindle fire with the vital air, awaken subtle speech (parā vāk), and then carry Her up to the Sahasrāra lotus, and unite Her with Parama Śiva. Then he should carry Her down to the Mūlādhāra lotus. Then he should worship Her with mental articles (TS., pp. 63-64).

Image.—An Image or Idol is not worshipped as a physical object. A Deity is invoked in it and then worshipped. An aspirant who looks upon an Image as a mere physical thing goes to hell. Similarly, if he regards a mantra as a mere sound, he goes to hell. An Image, a name or a mantra of a Deity, and the essence of a Deity are composed of pure consciousness bliss (chidānanda) (CCA., ii, ch. 17). An Image worshipped is not a mere symbol, but the Deity invoked in it. The spiritual form of the Deity is revealed to a worshipper in course of time (TS., p. 1). The "Bhāgavata" says: "God should be worshipped in an Image, Who abides in all creatures, until a devotee experiences Him in his heart (iii, 29, 25). Jīva Gosvāmī interprets it thus: a devotee should worship God in an Image with faith even after he has attained the intuitive knowledge of Him. The "Pañcharātra" inculcates the worship of an installed Image at all times without any break. But the worship of God in an Image does not bear fruit without compassion for all creatures in whom He dwells. Hence such worship should be attended with good will and friendship for all, charity and respect (Bhāg., iii, 29, 26-27; BS., 106.)

Inner Worship.—The "Bhāvanā Upaniṣad" inculcates inner worship in the form of meditation as distinguished from external worship of an Image or a diagram (yantra). It regards the body as Śrīchakra. Kuṇḍalinī, Serpent Power,

the power of knowledge, is the house. The power of will is Mahātripurāsundarī. The knower is the priest who makes offerings to a sacrificial fire. Knowledge is fire. A known object is melted butter. Meditation on non-difference of a knower, knowledge, and a known object is the worship of Śrīchakra. Sattva which is the cause of happiness is water, which purifies the body. Reflection on right and wrong is an offering (upachāra). A volition that the external sense-organs and the internal organs may apprehend their proper objects is invocation (āvāhana). The apprehension of one Brahman by the external sense-organs and the internal organs is posture (āsana). The unification of the individual self with the Supreme Self or Śiva-Śakti by raising the Divine Power in the Mūlādhāra lotus to the Ājña-chakra through Suṣumnā is offering water for washing the feet of the Deity (pādya). The realisation of one's transparence or purity is sipping water (āchāmana). Immersion of the whole body in the nectar of pure consciousness (chit) is ablution (snāna). Pure consciousness is not consciousness through a mental mode, or mental consciousness. It is the transcendental non-empirical consciousness of Śiva-Śakti, which is the essence of the individual self. The manifestation of the power of supreme bliss which is the essence of pure consciousness (chit) is a cloth (vastra). Suṣumnā of Barhmanāḍī extending from the Mūlādhāra chakra to the Ājñāchakra in which Divine Power in the forms of the power of knowledge, the power of will, and the power of action, is experienced is the sacred thread (brahmasūtra). Recollection or thought of the self's being devoid of attachment to objects other than itself is an orrament (vibhūṣaṇa). The individual self is really identical with the Supreme Self or Śiva and absolutely detached and transcendent. Recollection of Brahman or Being-Consciousness-Bilss as the Supreme Reality is a scent (gandha). The quest for the ground of all objects with a steady mind is a flower (kusuma). Identifying them with the Ātman or Self is incense (dhūpa). The meteoric

flash of the Brahman or Being-Consciousness-Bliss in an ethereal body is a lamp (dīpa). The cessation of all movements from one sensible object to another is food offered (naivedya). Identification of all degrees of conscsousness—waking state, dream, and deep sleep—in trance is a betel (tāmbūla). The Ātman shines in them all. All degrees of consciousness are permeated by the intuitive experience of the Ātman, Brahman, or Śiva. The ascent of the Divine Power (Kuṇḍalinī) from the Mūlādhāra to the Brahmarandhra or Sahasrāra and Her descent from the latter to the former are circumambulation (pradakṣiṇa). Trance or ecstatic consciousness (turīya) is obeisance (namaskāra). Merging in the Knower (Ātman) without a body is the sacrifice of an animal (bali). The experience of the disembodied Self or Ātman who is the true knower is animal sacrifice. Merging of the individual self in the Supreme Self and consuming the sense of the moral, the immoral, and the non-moral, in the knowledge of the Supreme Self as the only reality are an oblation to a sacrificial fire. Immersion of the individual self in the Supreme Self is perfect meditation (dhyāna). Such meditation makes an aspirant released in embodied life (jīvanmukta) (op. cit, pp. 548-49).

Japa.—Muttering of a mantra called Japa is of three kinds : (1) external (bāhya), (2) slightly audible (upāṁśu), and (3) mental (mānasa). An aspirant gradually passes from the first to the second, and then from the second to the third as his mind is directed from the external world to the inner world. External Japa consists in uttering a mantra with the vocal organs. It is not true Japa. Internal Japa consists in concentration of mind on Nāda in the heart-lotus. The former consists in uttering various sounds represented by letters in a mantra. The latter consists in repeated contemplation of the power of infinite consciousness (chitśakti) embodied in a mantra which assumes the form of Nāda in the heart-lotus after completely withdrawing the manas and the external sense-organs from their objects. Nāda is a mystic sound which is

not due to the impact of tangible substances (anāhata). Internal Japa is different from vocal (vācika) utterance of a mantra and mental (mānasa) representation of the act (YHD., iii, 6-7, pp. 195-96 ; YHS., pp. 197-98). Of the three kinds of Japa, audible, slightly audible, and mental, the third is superior to the second, and the second is superior to the first. "The sacrifice of Japa (japa-yajña) is ten times better than the performance of a sacrifice (vidhiyajña)". Slightly audible Japa is a hundred times better than a sacrifice. Mental Japa is a thousand times better than a sacrifice" ("Bhṛgusaṁhitā," PD., XV, 56, p. 390). Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "I am the sacrifice of Japa among the sacrifices (BG., X, 25 ; cp. VSSV., iii, 2., 110-15).

Withdrawal of min' from other objects, purity of body and mind, respect for a mantra, absence of mental agitation and self-abasement are the prerequisites for Japa. It should not be performed while lying, walking, eating, being angry, anxious, fatigued, or hungry. These restrictions should be observed in audible and slightly audible Japa. But there are no restrictions in mental Japa which may be performed in all places and times while walking, sitting, sleeping, pure or impure. One who performs mental Japa taking refuge in a mantra only acquires all the fruits of sacrifices. All the prescribed sacrifices and penances are not as efficacious as the sixteenth part of the sacrifice of Japa. Mental Japa is the best of the three kinds of Japa (TS., pp. 31-32).

Initiation in a mantra without Japa with faith and devotion is ineffective. Japa with mental concentration and meditation is necessary for rousing Kulakuṇḍalinī from Her sleep and making Her pierce the six lotuses. It destroys all sins, subdues passions, removes nescience (avidyā), and hastens the dawn of the saving knowledge (jñāna). It should be performed with the firm conviction that a Divine name (nāma) or a mantra is identical with Divine Mother (Brahman) and made of pure consciousness (chinmarīchi). A mantra is a form and an emanation of the

Divine Power, and Japa of it ultimately reveals its spiritual nature. Japa is the easiest and surest means of experiencing the Divine Power of pure consciousness and bliss and attaining the highest status (śivatva). A mantra is not efficacious without Japa with meditation. Meditation also is not efficacious without Japa of a mantra. The repetition of Japa with meditation should be continued till the realisation of the Brahman or Śiva-Śakti is attained. The mind should be fixed on the pure consciousness of Divine Mother, and Japa should be performed, until the manas is dissolved in Her pure consciousness. The dissolution of manas is necessary for the realisation of Her. It depends upon extinction of ignorance (avidyā), attachment, desire, love and hate, and eradication of ego (DG., V, 58-61, p. 194). Worship requires Japa. But it may be practised at other times (TVSD).

Penance (tapas).—Fasting on paticular occasions is observed as a penance. Ablution in a sacred river (eg., the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā, etc.) on particular occasions (eg., solar eclipse, lunar eclipse, etc.) is enjoined. Fasting is obligatory on the day when Divine Mother is worshipped until it is finished, and fast is broken by partaking of some food offered to Her. Penance is bodily, vocal and mental. Extetnal worship of a Deity, showing respect to a Master, wise persons, and Brāhmaṇas, continence, non-injury, cleanliness and simplicity are bodily penances. Speaking the agreeable and wholesome truth and the study of the Vedas are vocal penances. Self-control, tranquillity, purity of disposition, and silence are mental penances. Penances practised with strong faith without any desire for their fruits are actuated by sattva. Those practised for self-glorification or out of boastfulness are actuated by rajas. Those practised for self-torture or out of cruelty or malevolence are actuated by tamas (BG., XVii, 14-19).

Chakras.—The Śākta Tantras generally mention six centres of mystical consciousness in Suṣumnā in the spinal cord with

Iḍā on the right and Piṅgalā on the left. These are called Ṣaṭchakra. Besides these there is Sahasrāra or Brahmarandhra at the top of the head. They are not visible through a microscope on dissection. They are visible by the yogins through occult vision. They are not plexuses or ganglia in the autonomic nervous system. Bhāskararāya opines that they exist in the subtle body (liṅga śarīra,) and that they are supported by Suṣumnā. Śrī Aurobindo is of the same opinion. (YHS., p. 41 ; "More Lights on Yoga", Pondichery, 1953, pp. 31-32.)

(1) At the base of Suṣumnā there is the Mūlādhāra chakra of four yellow petals facing downward with the letters 'vaṁ', 'śaṁ', 'ṣaṁ', and 'saṁ' inscribed on them. This lotus is made of earth, and supported by an elephant. Kulakuṇḍalinī, Divine Power or Mother, lies asleep coiled in three circles and a half like a red luminous serpent around Svayambhu liṅga. The opening of Chitrinī nāḍī at the base of the liṅga is called the door of Brahman (brahmadvāra). Divine Power or Mother ascends through it to the higher centres. She closes the door of Brahman through Her body. Śakti Śākinī resides in the Mūlādhāra as Her attendant. The lotus is situated between the anus and the base of the sexual organ. Divine Power is awakened by the practice of breath-control (prāṇāyāma) and concentration of the mind at this centre on Her for a long time. (2) At the base of the sexual organ and above the Mūlādhāra lotus there is the Svādhiṣṭhāna lotus of six white petals with the letters 'baṁ', 'bhaṁ', 'maṁ', 'yaṁ,' 'raṁ,' and 'laṁ' inscribed on them. This lotus is composed of water, and supported by a white crocodile. Śivaliṅga resides in this lotus with Śakti Kākinī. (3) At the base of the navel there is the triangular Maṇipūra lotus of ten red petals with the letters 'ḍaṁ,' 'ḍhaṁ,' 'ṇaṁ,' 'taṁ,' 'thaṁ,' 'daṁ,' 'dhaṁ,' 'naṁ,' 'paṁ,' and 'phaṁ,' inscribed on them. Fire-God and Śakti Lākini reside in this lotus. It is composed of fire, and supported by a ram. (4) In the heart-cavity there is the hexagonal Anāhata lotus of twelve smoky petals with the letters 'kaṁ,' 'khaṁ,' 'gaṁ,'

'ghaṁ', 'ṅaṁ', 'chaṁ', 'chhaṁ', 'jaṁ', 'jhaṁ,' 'ñaṁ,' 'ṭaṁ,' and 'ṭhaṁ,' inscribed on them. This lotus is composed of air, and supported by a black antelope. The Patron Deity (iṣṭadevatā) resides in it with Śakti Rākinī. This is the seat of the Divine Being as the Supreme Self (paramātman) or the Inner controller (antaryāmin) and of the individual self (jīvātman). The Divine Being as Paramātman is experienced here as the result of concentration of mind at this centre. The individual self as a transcendent being of pure consciousness also is experienced here. An occult sound (nāda) also is heard here when the mind becomes clam and tranquil. (5) At the base of the throat there is the Viśuddha lotus of sixteen blue petals with the letters 'aṁ,' 'āṁ,' 'iṁ,' 'īm,' 'uṁ,' 'ūṁ,' 'ṛṁ,' 'ṝm,' 'liṁ,' 'eṁ,' 'aiṁ,' 'oṁ,' 'auṁ,' 'aṁ,' and 'aḥ' inscribed on them. Śivaliṅga resides in this lotus with Śakti Dākinī. It is called the abode of the goddess of speech. It is composed of ether (ākāśa), and supported by a white elephant. The bījas 'laṁ,' 'vaṁ,' 'raṁ,' 'yam,' and 'haṁ' of earth, water, fire, air, and ether, which constitute the Mūlādhāra, the Svādhiṣṭhāna, the Maṇipura, the Anāhata, and the Viśuddha lotuses, reside in them respectively (DBU., p. 291 ; YTU., p. 331 ; MNTI). (6) Between the eyebrows there is the Ājñāchakra of two yellow petals with the letters 'haṁ' and 'kṣam' inscribed on them. It is composed of prakṛti and manas composed of sattva, rajas and tamas. Śivaliṅga resides in it like a luminous lamp in a circular yoni with Śakti Hākinī. It is the centre of occult vision. The Ājñāchakra is so called because an aspirant receives the command of the Master (guru), or Brahman here. (7) In the centre of the crown of the head above the cerebrum there is the Sahasrāra lotus of a thousand petals with fifty letters mentioned above inscribed on them. In the centre there is a circle of effulgent light like millions of moons within which there is a triangle. Parama Śiva and Primordial Divine Power (ādyā śakti) reside here. This lotus is called Akula. Kulakuṇḍalinī wakes up

at the Mūlādhāra, ascends, pierces all the lotuses, and is united with Parama Śiva in the Sahasrāra. Parama Śiva is the Absolute with fully awakened infinite consciousness and bliss. The Śaivas call this lotus the abode of Śiva. The Śāktas call it the abode of Devī or Divine Mother. The Vaiṣṇavas call it the abode of Viṣṇu or Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Jīva Gosvāmī, a follower of Chaitaṇya, calls the Sahasrāra the spiritual abode of Kṛṣṇa, Vaikuṇṭha or Goloka, in the human body. Meditation on the Divine Being, Śiva- Śakti, at this centre with Japa of a Divine name or mantra is enjoined by Śāktaism. This is the highest and most potent centre.

Chaṇḍīdāsa, a great Vaiṣṇava poet of Bengal before Chaitanya, mentions these seven chakras. A Vaiṣṇava Saṁhitā calls Rādhā Kulakuṇḍalinī. Rādhā leaves Mūlādhāra called Kula to meet Kṛṣṇa in the Sahasrāra called Akula. Śaivaism also accepts the seven chakras. Kabir, a follower of Rāmānanda, mentions the chakras, Triveṇī, Suṣumnā, and anāhata sound in his poems. All cults of Hinduism inculcate meditation on Patron Deity (iṣṭā devtā) in the heart-lotus. The earliert Upaniṣads enjoin meditation on Brahman as 'Aum' or 'Oṁ' in the heart-ether. Hence Kuṇḍalinīyoga or Ṣaṭ-chakra-sādhanā was known to the principal cults of Hinduism. It is a form of inner worship of the Divine Being as distinguished from external worship of an Idol. It is a form of individual worship as contrasted with corporate worship. Rāma Prasāda refers to the Divine Mother or Kuṇḍalinī residing in the chakras or lotuses with letters inscribed on them, and to meditation on Her at these centres in several songs. Śrī Aurobindo made these chakras the bases of his integral yoga (Arthur Avalon, Introduction, "Tantra of Great Liberation"; TS., p. 75 ; SS , YH., YHD., i, 25-26, pp. 36-41 ; YHS., pp. 41-43 ; "Serpent Power," 1953, p. 161 ; SLU., p. 655 ; YŚU., pp. 463 & 467 ; YCU., pp. 339-40 ; Chaṇḍīdāsa, Padāvalī, Calcutta, 1340, Baṅgābda, pp. 161-62 ; Kabir Granthāvalī, Kāśī, pp.

81, 84, 125, 136-37 & 248; "Lights on Yoga," Pondichery, 1953, pp. 18-19, 29-31; "Saṁkṣepa-Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī" on the "Bhāgavata," ii, 1, 28; X, 87, 18.)

The four petals of the Mūlādhāra chakra are the seats of four kinds of bliss—supreme bliss (parānanda), innate bliss (sahajānanda), yogic bliss (yogānanda), and a hero's bliss (vīrānanda). The six petals of the Svādhiṣṭhāna chakra are the seats of credulity, cruelty, mistrust, disdain, delusion, and false knowledge. The ten petals of the Maṇipūra chakra are the seats of laziness, craving, envy, dullness, shame, fear, delusion, dejection, disgust, and wickedness. The twelve petals of the Anāhatā chakra are the seats of greed, insincerity, indecision, regret, hope, anxiety, endeavour, the sense of 'mine,' arrogance, languor, discrimination, and egoism. The sixteen petals of the Viśuddha chakra are the seats of 'huṁ,' 'phaṭ,' 'vaṣaṭ,' 'svadhā,' 'svāhā,' 'namaḥ,' nectar, seven musical notes—niṣāda, ṛṣabha, gāndhāra, ṣaḍaja, madhyama, dhaivata, and pañchama, 'oṁ,' and udgītha (PD., XXV, 97, p. 550, TVSD.)

The Śākta Tantras regard the Mūlādhāra chakra as the seat of the individual self (jīvātman) and the Supreme Self or Śiva. Its four petals are the seats of four kinds of bliss. Innate bliss is the natural bliss of the individual self. Yogic bliss is due to meditation on the Divine Being. A hero's bliss is due to complete self-mastery. Supreme bliss is Divine bliss experienced by an individual self in an advanced state of Tāntric sādhanā. The heart-lotus also is the seat of the individual self and the Supreme Self. The Ājñāchakra is the seat of Sadāśiva, wherein the mind is dissolved and superconsciousness (unmanī) is experienced. It is the abode of uninterrupted bliss. The Sahasrāra is the seat of Parama Śiva with His Divine Power, where He reveals Himself to an aspirant in His full glory (IPEW., pp. 9-10; cp. "Lights on Yoga," pp. 17-18, 52-54, 66-68). All the lotuses are centers of mystic consciousness. Divine Power and consciousness are dormant in them, and can be roused and liberated by concen-

tration at on the Divine Being. They are centres of different kinds of mystic consciousness.

Rāma Kṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa mentions seven chakras, which are the centres of concentration of mind. The three lower centres, mūlādhāra, svādhiṣṭhāna, and maṇipūra, are concerned with 'woman and wealth' or worldly affairs. At the heart-centre, anāhta, Divine Light is seen as the result of concentration. This vision draws the mind away from worldly affairs. At the throat-centre, viśuddha, nescience (avidyā) is partially removed, and the mind delights in thoughts and talks of God only. At the eye-brow centre, ājñā, the Divine Light is visioned always, but ego is not completely eradicated. At the Sahasrāra centre there is direct intuition of the Barhman in a state of trance (samādhi) when there is complete eradication of ego (aham). There is the direct experience "I am Brahman." But this state of Identity-consciousness does not continue long. So the mind oscillates between the highest centre and the eye-brow centre in order to retain a certain degree of duality-consciousness which is sustained by devotion (Kathāmṛta, i, pp. 71-73 & 92; S. B. Das Gupta, Bhārater Śakti—sādhanā o śakta sāhitya, Calcutta, Bengali year 1367, pp. 282-83).

Śrī Aurobindo gives the following account of the chakras. The mūlādhāra governs the physical; svādhiṣṭhāna governs the lower vital; the maṇipūra governs the larger vital; the anāhata governs the emotional mind; the viśuddha governs the expressive mind; the ājñā governs the dynamic mind; the sahasrāra governs "the higher thinking mind," "the illumined mind," and "the Overmind" ("Lights on Yoga," pp. 18-19) The Overmind is the passage from Mind to Supermind (Ibid, p. 34). The ājña is the centre of "the inner mind, of occult vision." At the mūlādhāra Kuṇḍalinī Śakti or Yoga-Śakti is coild up and asleep as in the other centres. But at the Sahasrāra "the Divine Force is awake, scient, potent, extended and wide (Ibid, pp. 17 & 67). "In the heart-centre one concentrates

in an aspiration, for an opening, for the presence of the living image of the Divine there" (Ibid, pp. 67-68). "Spiritual peace and silence, the Light, the Power, the Knowledge, the Ananda come from above" (Ibid, p. 53). The functions of the centres from the base are (1) commanding the physical consciousness, (2) commanding little greeds, lusts and desires, (3) commanding the larger life-forces, passions and desires, (4) commanding the emotional mind and the psychic being, (5) commanding expressions of mind, (6) "commanding thought, will and vision, and (7) commanding the higher thinking mind and the illumined mind and opening to the overmind" ("More Lights on Yoga," p. 35. Ibid, p. 31 & 34).

Srichakra—Bhāskararāya enjoins meditation on Śrīchakra above the Ājñāchakra (YHS., p. 43). The "Tripurātāpinī Upaniṣad" describes Śrīchakra in the following manner. It consists of three triangles with vertices downwards and three triangles with vertices upwards, the latter intersecting the former. They are situated within concentric circles. There are eight petals outside the first circle. There are sixteen petals outside the second circle. The outermost circle is placed within a square with four openings in the four directions (Op. cit., p. 536 & diagram, preface ; CHI., Vol II, first edition, pp. 186-87). Śrīchakra is called a yantra. It is a mystic diagram which represents the universe—the manifestatation of Śiva-Śakti. It is worshipped either externally like an Image or mentally through meditation. Both kinds of worship of a yantra lead to the fulfilment (siddhi) of Tāntric sādhanā.

The "Bhavanā Upaniṣad" regards the human body as Śrīchakra, and enjoins the inner worship of it, which is explained below. Various kinds of yantras are described by the Śākta Tantras. The "Yoginīhṛdaya" describes Śrichakra in the following manner. It consists of nine triangles. Five triangles have their vertices downwards ; four triangles have their vertices upwards. They intersect each other, and form

the Navayoni chakra. The elements of it are Dharma, Adharma, Ātman, Antarātman, Paramātman, Jñānātman, Jīva, objects of knowledge, and valid knowledge. It is really pure consciousness (chit) and bliss (ānanda), within and without, and unlimited by time, space and form. The Baindava Chakra is the inner while ninefold (navayoni) chakra is the outer. The latter is composed of the Vaikharī Mātrikā (letters) only. The inmost or Baindava chakr represents Mahābindu—the equilibrium of Śiva and Śakti. Its three sides consist of the vowels 'a', 'ā', 'i', 'ī', 'u', 'ū', 'ṛ', 'ṝ', 'ḷi', 'lli', 'e', 'ai', 'o', 'au', and 'aṁ', and its centre is the vowel 'aḥ'. Śiva (Kāmeśvara) and Śakti (Kāmeśvarī) are its presiding Deities seated on Mahābindu or Sadāśiva. Śrīchakra is a mystic diagram of the Supreme Divine Power expressed in the causal, subtle, and gross universe (YH., YHD., YHS., i, Introduction, pp. X-Xiii ; TVSD).

Pasu, Vira and Divya dispositions.—Men are divided into three types according to their dispositions (bhāva) : (1) the paśu (animal), (2) the hero (vīra), and (3) the godlike (divya). Inertia (tamas) is predominant in the first, on which energy (rajas) operates ; energy is predominant in the second which operates on essence (sattva); essence is predominant in the third, which preponderates over inertia and energy. Inertia or darkness (tamas) is the cause of ignorance, delusion, negligence, indolence, and sleep. Energy (rajas) is the cause of love, attachment, craving, and action. Essence (sattva) is the cause of knowledge and pleasure. Desire, anger, greed, and pain spring from energy (BG., xiv, 6-9, 12-13, 16-17). A paśu lives on the plane of ignorance, duality and plurality. He does not regard an Image as a Deity, a Master as an instrument of Divine Power, a mantra as charged with spiritual power and identical with a Deity, and distinguishes between different Deities. He is not permitted to worship the Divine Mother with fish, meat, parched cereals, wine, and sexual union. He worships Her with their substitutes, viz., egg-fruit, red radish, masur (a kind of pulse), or red sesamum

for fish ; ginger, wheat, beans, or garlic for meat ; rice, wheat, or gram for parched cereals ; milk, ghee or honey for wine ; and he meditates on Her feet in lieu of sexual union. He is engaged in the performance of customary religious rites of little spiritual significance and the observance of vows performed by common people. He is ignorant of the real meaning of Tāntric rites (YH, YHD., iii, 191, pp. 332 & 334 ; YHS., ii, 43, p. 142). He follows the Vedic rules (vedāchāra).

A hero (vīra) is restless, active, arrogant and excitable due to the excess of energy (rajas) acting on essence (sattva). He has subdued his passions, controlled his sense-organs, acquired self-command, purity and strength of character, and is therefore permitted by the Śākta Tantras to worship the Divine Mother with fish, (matsya), meat (māṁsa), parched cereals (mudrā), and wine (madya). Generally worship with sexual union (maithuna) is forbideen. In exceptional cases of spiritual advancement a hero is permitted to worship Her with sexual union with his wife for the conquest of the sex-instinct and carnal desire. These articles of enjoyment are offered to the Divine Mother with repetition of mantras and worship of Her in order to purify and sublimate them and tranform the instinctual life of enjoyment (pravṛtti) into the spiritual life of renunciation (nivṛtti). A hero sacrifices 'thisness' (idāntā) to the 'I-ness' (ahantā)—'this'-consciousness to the 'I'-consciousness—in the battle of life, experiences his nature as a transcendent spirit, and destroys all evils. He has acquired the knowledge of the secret of a mantra of the Divine Mother. He worships Her with the five articles (pañcha-tattva) in the company of a hero. He does not worship with them in the company of an animal (paśu) (YHD i, 65-66, p. 76; YH., ii, 1, p. 90; YH., YHD., iii, 191, p. 332). He habitually lives a virtuous life, but experiences that virtue and vice are the beautiful and distorted expressions of the Divine Power. He partially transcends duality and distinction.

A godlike (divya) person is possessed of a sāttvika disposition. He is self-restrained, tranquil, silent, and inactive.

He is truthful, compassionate, respectful to all women as manifestations of the Divine Mother, and benevolent to all creatures as Her expressions, and thinks the universe to be permeated by Her. He has firm faith in the Vedas and the Āgamas, his Master, mantra, tutelary Deity, and Image or mystic diagram (yantra). He worships Her thrice daily, performs Japa at night, and offers every thing to Her. He does not make any distinction between one Deity (eg., Kālī) and another (eg., Kṛṣṇa), and regards all Deities as aspects of the Divine Mother or Śiva-Śakti (IMNT., pp. lxv-lxxi). He transcends the distinction of virtue and vice as constructions of the human mind and social conventions, and practises Tantric yoga, and worships the Divine Mother with breath-control, concentration, meditation, trance, and rousing Kulakuṇḍalinī and making Her pierce the six centres of mystic consciousness (chakra) and uniting Her with Parama Śiva in the Brahmarandhra (cp. op. cit). He is an eater of fish in the sense that he equilibrates inhalation and exhalation, which are the fishes moving about in Iḍā and Piṅgalā, and that he retains the vital force in Suṣumnā and thereby brings about organic equilibrium conducive to mental concentration. He is an eater of meat in the sense that he completely controls his tongue and restrains his speech. He is truthful, sweet-tongued, and reserved in speech. He is an eater of parched cereals in the sense that he has acquired the right knowledge of Parama Śiva united with Mahākuṇḍalinī at the Sahasrāra lotus. He is a drinker of wine in the sense that he drinks the stream of nactar which flows from the Sahasrāra lotus, and is intoxicated with it. He is a true performer of sexual union in the sense that he has acquired the knowledge of Śiva-Śakti by uniting the bīja 'ra' in the Maṇipūra lotus with the bīja 'ma' in the form of a point (bindu) in the Ājñāchakra through inhalation and exalation (ajapā) which are in the form of 'ā'. To be firmly establihed in such knowledge attended with supreme bliss is the real act of sexual union

(Haṭhayogapradīpikā & Āgamasāra). A godly aspirant is an adept in meditation on the Divine mother at the centres of mystic consciousness, and experiences Her in them and the universe. He transcends the plane of duality and distinction, and partakes of Her supreme undifferentiated consciousness and delight. He dissolves his mind, eradicates his ego (aham), and annuls the world of phenomenal appearances (idam). He harmonises and synthesises duality and distinction in unity, and attains the fulfilment (siddhi). He acquires the integral knowledge and the intuitive experience. Śāktaism is the practical science of attaining the Advaita Vedānta knowledge and Absotuteness (śivatva). It is sheer nonsense and gross perversion of the truth to brand it as gross egoistic hedonism or unrestrained sensualism. Rāma Prasāda, Rāma Kṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa, Bāmā Kṣepā, and other Śakta saints attained God-realisation through the Śākta cult of spiritual discipline. Śrī Aurobindo based his Integral Yoga on this cult, adapted, simplified and rationalised it for the upliftment of humanity to the supramental level.

Knowledge (jnana).—Nescience (ajñāna) is the cause of actions (karma) for the gratification of egoistic desires. It is the cause of works for self-gratification (pravṛtti). Unless nescience becomes attenuated, there cannot arise a desire for renunciation (nivṛtti). Nescience is the cause of the knowledge of duality and difference. True knowledge is the cause of the knowledge of nondifference or identity (abheda). Nescience or ignorance of the true nature of the individual self as an eternal spirit—a child of the Divine Mother—is destroyed by the true knowledge of it. Nescience of the true nature of the world as an expression and play of the Divine Mother or power of 'I'-consciousness (vimarśa) and creative delight is destroyed by the true knowledge of it. Sense-control, mind-control, endurance, withdrawal of mind and sense-organs from their objects, detachment from earthly and heavenly happiness, and desire for emancipation are the prerequisites for the acquision of the saving knowledge. The merits

acquired by the performance of righteous actions in many past births produce a desire for liberation. Knowledge cannot be acquired without resorting to a competent Master (guru) and arduous spiritual discipline under his close guidance. Knowledge of the Supreme Reality is hidden in an embodied soul, and can be brought out by continuous concentration of mind and meditation. Human birth is unavailing without acquiring the saving knowledge (DG., vi, 33-45, pp. 200-01.)

Seven stages in the acquisition of the saving knowledge are described in the following manner. (1) At first, an aspirant keeps the company of saints, hears the Sāstras, and practises detachment (vairāgya) from the objects of enjoyment. These acts produce a desire for liberation in him. He should discard enjoyment (pravṛtti) and adopt renunciation (nivṛtti.) (2) Then he should cultivate reflection (vicāraṇā) on truth and untruth, the eternal and the non-eternal, the real and the unreal. (3) Then he should sedulously practise the subsidiary means to the acquisition of true knowledge (sāṅgabhāvanā.) (4) Then he should dissolve all the subtle subconscious impressions of emotions, desires and actions (vāsanā-vilaya). (5) Then he attains embodied release (jīvanmukti) ,experiences pure consciousness and bliss (śuddha-saṁvid-ānanda), and attains a state which is half-conscious and half-asleep. (6) Then he attains a state of superconsciousness (asaṁvedana). what is called unconscious trance (asamprajñāta samādhi) is really superconscious trance. It is a state of condensed bliss only resembling deep sleep. It is the fourth state (turīya) of perfect statelessness or liberation. (7) Then he attains the last super-ecstatic state (turīyātītā) called supreme nirvāṇa which is completely devoid of object-consciousness. The first three states are waking states. The fourth state is called dream wherein the world appears to be like a dream. The fifth state is called deep sleep since it is in the nature of condensed bliss. The sixth state is called ecstasy (turīya) or the fourth state in the nature of superconsciousness. The seventh state is called

the super-ecstatic (turīyātīta) state. It is ineffable, incomprehensible, self-manifest being (APU., V, 81-89, p. 507). The fourth state (turīya, turya) is devoid of the sense of 'I' or 'not-I,' being or non-being, desire and volition, individual nescience (avidyā) and cosmic nescience (māyā), inequality and unrest, egoism (ahaṁkāra) and attachment (āsakti), waking state, dream, and deep sleep. It is a state of tranquillity, equanimity, equalily, silence, transparence, fulfilment, renunciation, and perfect bliss. It is a state of doing all works with complete renunciation of all objects. It is a state of destruction of mind and ego. The existence of mind is the cause of intense suffering. The extinction of mind, or desire and attachment, is the cause of supreme delight. Hence the mind should be merged and dissolved in the ether of pure consciousness (chidākāśa) with its desire and attachment (APU., V, 107-17, pp. 508-09).

There are five kinds of errors (bhrama). (1) The knowledge of the individual self (jīva) and God (īśvara) as different from each other is the first error. (2) The knowledge of the activity of the individual self as real is the second error. (3) The knøwledge of the individual self united with the causal body, the subtle body, and the gross body as attached or non-dettached (saṅgin) is the third error. (4) The knowlege of the cause of the world as modified into the world is the fourth error. (5) The knowledge of the world as different from its cause as real is the fifth error. (1) The first error is annulled by knowing that Brahman reflected in nescience (avidyā) or the internal organ is the individual self. (2) The second error is annulled by knowing that activity of intellect (buddhi) or egoism (ahaṁkāra) is falsely attributed to the individual self as redness of a flower is falsely ascribed to a transparent crystal. (3) The third error is annulled by knowing that the individual self is detached from its causal body, subtle body, and gross body even as ether (ākāsa) is detached from a temple and a jar in which it is enclosed. (4) The fourth error is cancelled by knowing that the world

is really nondifferent from Brahman, just as a gold ornament is really nondifferent from gold. When these errors are completely destroyed, the mind is merged and dissolved in Brahman, and identified with the ether of pure consciousness (APU., i, 1-16, pp. 493-94).

Devotion (bhakti).—The way of devotion (bhaktiyoga) is easy to follow because it is mental and because it does not entail any torture of the body and the mind. Devotion is of three kinds according as it is prompted by tamas, rajas and sattva. (1) Devotion prompted by anger, envy, boastfulness and cruelty is motivated by tamas. It is called tāmasa devotion. (2) Devotion prompted by the desire for one's own good, e.g., renown, happiness. etc., and expressed in the worship of the Divine Mother for the attainment of egoistic ends, and devoid of the oppression of others is motivated by rajas. It is called rājasa devotion. It is attended with the knowledge of difference between oneself and others. (3) Devotion consisting in the offering of one's works (karmārpaṇa) to God, enjoined by the Vedas, with the determinate knowledge that they are obligatory duties is prompted by sattva. It is called sāttvika devotion (cp. "Lights on Yoga" p. 73). It is attended with the knowledge of difference and contributory to supreme devotion. Rājasa devotion is prompted by egoistic desire (sakāma) for ends. Sāttvika devotion is actuated by the sense of duty. Both are attended with the knowledge of difference. Tāmasa devotion and rājasa devotion do not lead to supreme devotion. (4) Supreme devotion (pāra bhakti) consists in hearing the qualities of the Divine Mother, chanting Her names, and uninterrupted concentration of mind on Her, the abode of excellent qualities, without any desire for liberation in the form of proximity to Her (sāmīpya), union with Her (sāyujya), residence in Her abode (sālokya), or enjoyment of Her lordship (sārṣṭi), prompted by the desire of serving Her only. It is not actuated by the desire for liberation, because a devotee has the only desire to serve Her (cp. "Bhāgavata"

Supreme devotion culminates in passionate love (prema) and supreme attachment (parānurakti) or intimate affection. It is characterised by the sense of 'mine' which ultimately results in the abolition of the sense of difference between a devotee and the Divine Mother. The individual soul is lost in Her. The relation of 'I' and 'Thou' vanishes. Either of the two remains. Thus supreme devotion is finally characterised by the sense of nondifference or identity beween an individual soul and the Divine Mother, and between oneself and others. Good will and compassion for all, equality, non-injury and the like virtues are the concomitants of such devotion. Faith in hearing the Sāstras, pilgrimage to holy places, muttering of mantras and names of the Divine Mother, rapture, shedding tears, faltering voice, etc., in chanting Her names or hymns, and worshipping Her with undivided love are the expressions of this highest devotion (D G., Vi, 2-21, pp. 197-99). A devotce's mind is dissolved in the Divine Mother, Who is of the nature of pure consciousness only (chinmātra) only, in the state of supreme devotion. It is purged of egoism (ahaṁkāra)—the sense of 'I' and mine, and of false identification of the self with the body. It becomes idependent even of the body. No thought of maintaining the body torments it. It entrusts even the maintenance of the body to the Divine Mother. It is filled with the thought of Her only, permeated by Her consciousness, and cannot cherish any other thought. Such a devotee entrusts himself copletely to the Divine Mother, and She takes charge of him. Supreme devotion is accompanied with supreme detachment (vairāgyā). The perfection of supreme devotion is called the saving knowledge (jñāna). An aspirant who has attained true knowledge attains embodied release (jīvanmukti). He does actions only under the influence of prārabdha karma, goes to the abode of the Divine Mother after death, experiences all objects of enjoyment, acquires the true knowledge of Her as pure consciousness (chidrūpa), and is then emancipated from bondage

(DG., Vi, 24-31, pp. 199-200). This account of devotion is similar to the Vaiṣṇava account (BRS., i, ch. 3-4, BS., 257-287, cp. "More Lights on Yoga", pp. 111-16).

Rāma Prasāda and Rāma Kṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa laid great stress on devotion, self-surrender, self-dedication, taking refuge in the Divine Mother, and craving for Her grace for attaining beatitude. Perhaps they were influenced by Chaitanya's cult of devotion and desireless undivided love for God. These elements of devotion are found in Sāktaism as preached by the "Chaṇḍi" and the "Devī Gītā". But in the Sākta Tantras mystic rites, yoga, and knowledge are emphasised, though devotion is inculcated. Rāma Prasāda attempted a synthesis of works (karma), meditation (yoga), and knowledge (jñāna) with devotion (bhakti). He preferred union with Divine Mother (sāyujya) without losing his soul's identity to complete extinction of self in the Absolute (nirvāṇā). He preferred devotion and love for Divine Mother to his soul's identification with Her like a follower of Chaitanya. He regarded himself as an eternal child of Divine Mother and cultivated Her presence. He lived in Her kingdom as Her direct subject. A sweet blend of knowledge and devotion is found in his teachings.

Works (Karma).—Works only cannot lead to the attainment of the Divine Being. They are the duties (dharma) enjoined by the scriptures. The Vedas are the commands of the Divine Mother. The Smṛtis conform to the Vedas. They are authoritative, and the duties inculcated by them are obligatory, because they embody the wisdom of the omniscient and omnipotent Divine Mother, and because they are not tained with nescience (ajñāna). The other scriptures being tainted with nescience are not authoritative, and hence their injunctions are mere semblances of duties. The persons desirous of liberation should always perform the duties enjoined by the Vedas and the Smṛtis in harmony with them. The other scriptures which are repugnant to them are motivated by tamas, and should be discarded. The portions of

the Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Saura, Śākta, and Gāṇapatya scriptures which are concordant with the Vedas should be followed, and those which are discordant with them should be discarded (DG., Viii, 13-21, 25-27, 30-31).

The performance of duties enjoined by the Vedas purifies the mind. Hence they should be performed carefully until sense-control (śama), mind-control (dama), endurance (titikṣā) of pleasure and pain, and detachment due to the excess of sattva are acquired. When these virtues are acquired, a person should resort to a teacher who is firm in the pursuit of Brahman, hear the instructions of the Vedānta regarding the identity of the individual self and Brahman, and reflect upon them (DG., iii, 15-19). The duties called restraints (yama) and observances (niyama) discussed under Yoga should be performed. Sense control (śama), mind-control (dama), endurance (titikṣā) of pleasure and pain, withdrawal of mind and sense-organs from worldly pleasures (uparati), dispassion for earthly and heavenly happiness (vairāgya), and desire for liberation (mumukṣā) should be cultivated (DG., Vii, 40). Oblations to a sacrificial fire, penance, and charity should be performed for the pleasure of the Divine Mother. Boastfulness, egoism, cruelty, hypocrisy, envy, conceit, arrogance, and other vices should be exterminated. Primal egoistic desires (eṣaṇā) should be eradicated. Compassion for all creatures should be cultivated. Daily obligatory duties (nitya karma) and occasional duties (naimittika karma) and vows (vrata) and festivals relating to the worship of the Divine Mother should be performed (DG., Vi, 4-5, 21-23, Viii, 11 & 34).

Nescience (ajñāna) of the real nature of the individual self as eternal Spirit is the cause of desire (kāma). Desire is the cause of action (karma). Hence action or performance of duties cannot bring about liberation. True knowledge (jñāna) of the individual self as the Divine Being only can destroy nescience (ajñāna), which is the cause of desire and action. Works (karma) are necessary for purifying the mind.

A pure mind only can acquire the saving knowledge. Works are aids to knowledge. Knowledge destroys avidyā called a knot of the heart. Nescience is the cause of action. Thus knowledge and works being opposed to each other cannot coexist. Knowledge is like light. Works are like darkness. Light and darkness cannot coexist with each other. Hence works alone or combined with knowledge cannot lead to liberation. True knowledge only is the means to release (DG., iii, 6-8, 11-14). This is the view of Śaṁkara also.

Nescience is the cause of egoism, the false sense of 'I' and 'mine'. Egoism is the cause of attachment. Attachment is the cause of desire. Desire is the cause of action. It is painful. It is a state of tension between a feeling of want and anticipated satisfaction. Pleasure is the consequence of a fulfilled desire. But when one desire is gratified, another desire springs up, and produces an effort to fulfil it. Thus pain produces pleasure, and pleasure produces pain. The cycle continues for ever. Love, hate, anger, envy, delusion, pride and the like all spring from attachment and egoism due to nescience. Untile nescience is destroyed by true knowledge, bondage cannot be destroyed (DG., iii, 8-10).

Yoga.—Śāktaism adopts the practice of eightfold yoga for bringing on the union of the individual soul with the Divine Being. It takes 'yoga' in the sense of union of man with God, like the "Bhagavad Gītā" (DG., iv, 2, p. 190 ; ŚT., XXV, 1) Lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and envy,—six passions, —are the impediments to yoga. They can be conqured by the practice of yoga, which consists of restraint (yama), observance (niyama), posture (āsana,) breath-control (prāṇāyāma), withdrawal of the sense-organs from their objects (pratyāhāra,) fixation of mind at the centres of mystic consciousness (dhāraṇa), meditation on the Patron Deity (dhyāna,) and trance (samādhi). Non-injury or non-killing (ahiṁsā), truthfulnes (satya), non-thieving (asteya), sex-restraint (brahmacharya), compassion (kṛpā,) simplicity (ārjava,) forgiveness (kṣamā), patience (dhṛti), temperance (mitāhāra) in eating, and cleanliness

(śaucha) are the ten restraints. Austerities (tapas), contentment (santoṣa), faith in God (āstikya), charity (dāna), worship of a Patron Deity (devapūjana), hearing the saving truth (siddhānta-śravaṇa), moral reason (hrī), determination of duty (mati), muttering a mantra or a divine name (japa), and making oblations to a sacrificial fire (homa) are the ten observances. There are various kinds of bodily postures. Breath-control consists in inhaling air, retaining it, and exhaling it, at the rate of 1 : 4 : 2. It should be attended with muttering a mantra or a divine name (japa) and meditation (dhyāna) on the Divine Being. Pratyāhāra consists in withdrawing the external sense-organs from their objects forcibly. It involves withdrawal of the manas also from them. Dhāraṇa consists in fixing the mind with the vital force at the centres of mystic consciousness on the Divine Power. Meditation (dhyāna) consists in contemplation of the Divine Power uninterrupted by the thoughts of other objects. Trance (samādhi) consists in absorption of the individual self (jīvātman) in the Supreme Self (paramātman) (DG., iv, 3-8, 19,21-22, 24-26, pp. 190-92; ŚT., PD., XXV, 4-9, pp- 539-40).

Meditation (dhyana)—Patajñali defines meditation (dhyāna as a stream of similar cognitions of an object uninterruped by the dissimilar cognitions of unlike objects. (Yogasūtra, iii, 2). Śāktaism inculcates meditation on Parama Śiva or nondual absolute pure consciousness with the mind directed inward. Vijñānabhairava Bhaṭṭāraka describes meditation as contemplation (chintā) which is partless, formless, and abodeless as distinguised from meditation on the form of a Deity possessed of a face, hands, etc. It is the continuous contemplation of the supremely lovable Divine Mother, Whose worship completely consumes the gross body, the subtle body, and the causal body of an embodied self (jīva), and Who is nondifferent from Parama Śiva (YHD., iii, 7, p, 196). Meditation, for Patañjāli, is a means to the discriminative knowledge (viveka) of the individual self (puruṣa) as detached and absolutely different from the not-self or

mind-body-complex which is a modification of prakṛti (kaivalya). But, meditation, for Śāktaism, is a means to the union (yoga) of the individual soul with Śiva-Śakti. It especialy prescribes meditation on the Divine Being at the centres of mystic consciuesness (chakra) in the human body, and meditation on a mystic diagram (Yantra, Śrīchakra) which represents the Divine Being, the individual self, and the universe.

The effects of meditation on the Divine Being of the different lotuses (chakra) are described in the following manner. Meditation on Him like a luminous fire at the Mūlādhara ultimately fulfils all desires. Meditation on Him at the Svādhiṣṭhāna ultimately generates the power of attracting the whole world. Meditation on luminous Divine Power (Kuṇḍalinī) at the Māṇipūra nltimately generates all kinds of occult powers (siddhi). Meditation on the Divine Being at the Anāhata ultimately generates the power of subduing all persons. Meditation on Him at the Viśuddha makes an aspirant hear anāhata sound. Meditation on Him at the Ājñā like a flame of a lamp ultimately generates the power of an aspirant's all words coming true. Meditation on Him at the Sahasrāra like a jet of smoke liberates an aspirant. Meditation on the Void (Śūnya) at the Tāluchakra at the upper end of the throat ultimately generates the dissolution of mind (chittalaya) and the experience of a stream of bliss. Meditation on the Supreme Brahman at the Ākāśachakra above the Sahasrāra ultimately gives an aspirant the saving knowledge that all is Brahman without distinction of subject and object (SLU., p. 655).

Trance presupposes dissolution of mind (monanāśa), desirelessness and egolessness. Trance is absorption of the mind in the Absolute. An aspirant should make his mind objectless. It can be made objectless if it is purged of all desires. A desireless mind only is objectless. Here 'desire' means desire for wealth, earthly or heavenly happiness, and virtue. It excludes desire for emancipation. Desire is the cause of

bondage. Renunciation of desire is the cause of release. Hence desirelessness should be practised. Egoistic desire for happiness and altruistic desire for social good should be discarded, and only desire for emancipation from bondage should be cherished.

Desire springs from attachment to external objects. When attachment to them is destroyed, desire is destroyed. Attachment is the cause of bondage. Detachment is the cause of release. Extinction of attachment generates desirelessness. Desirelessness brings about dissolution of mind (chittalaya) and egolessness. A desireless mind becomes calm, tranquil, free, absorbed in contemplation of the Absolute. It can acquire the saving knowledge of the Absolute.

Trance (samadhi).—Trance is complete absorption of the mind in the object of contemplation, e.g., the Absolute or a symbol.

There are two kinds of trance : (1) determinate (savikalpa) and indeterminate (nirvikalpa). The former takes the aid of determinations while the latter is free of determinations. They are of two kinds : known objects and (2) sounds or names. Objects are either physical objects or mental modes. The mergence of the mind in an empirical object (e.g. an idol) or in a mental mode (e.g., an image, or a concept) is determinate. In both the experience of one's self depends upon the determination of a sound or an empirical object. Indeterminate trance is devoid of any thought of a name or a form. It is the mergence of the mind in pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss or or Supreme Self without any knowledge of distinction of self and God, which is a false appeareance (SRU., op. cit., 25-33, pp. 647-48). It is devoid of undifferentiated Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The extinction of attachment and desire, the destruction of mind and ego, and the acquisition of the saving knowledge of the Absolute are interdependent and extremely difficult of attainment. These three should be cultivated simultaneously with patience, vigilance and perseverence.

Renunciation of desires restrains the agitation of the vital forces and brings about organic equlibrium which is conducive to mental equipoise. Mental equilibrium is necessary for the contemplation of the Absolute. Hence love and hatred should be completely transcended, and perfect equality and equanimity should be sedulously cultivated. The tranquil mind purged of love and hatred, attachment, desire and egoism can contemplate and experience the pure transcendent Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the Absolute, Brahman, Ātman, or Śiva (APU., op. cit., iii, 7, 46-48, 74-87., iv, 4-8, 102 ; pp. 499-504).

Mind is the cause of bondage and liberation. Bondage is attachment to objects. Liberation is detachment from them. An objectless mind is conducive to release. When the mind detached from all objects is concentrated on the Supreme Self in the heart-lotus, it is finally dissolved. When the mind is destroyed, the Supreme Self alone shines. The mind and its modes are unreal appearances because they are different from Brahman (YTU., op. cit., v, 1-5, pp. 540-41).

Mind tinged with conscious and unconscious desire (vāsanā) is conducive to bondage. Mind untainted by desire is conducive to emancipation. A desireless mind becomes inactive. Only the Absolute consciousness or will is active. A calm mind should meditate on this Truth. It should discard the thought of all other objects and meditate on them as the Absolute consciousness or will. It should always abide in the pure infinite consciousness of the Absolute, whether it is in the waking state, dream, deep sleep, or trance. When it becomes completely pacified on the extinction of desires, it becomes fit for being absorbed in trance. So long as desires persist, the mind continues to be restless, fevered, and anguished, and the whole world appears to be aflame with fire. Hence desires should be weakened, rendered impotent, and then extinguished. When desires are emaciated, attachment, love, hatred, anger, joy, grief, and other emotions and passions are weakened. When the mind ceases to be swayed by emotions and

passions, it becomes fit for meditating on the Absolute. Complete absorption of the mind is necessary for acquiring the intuitive experience of the Absolute. Merging in the Brahman is called higher wisdom (parā prajñā). It presupposes the destruction of mind, ego, attachment, love, hatred, and desire. In the state of egolessness, desirelessness, perfect equipoise, the spiritual body of the Divine Mother made of supreme bliss flashes forth. She is attained by destroying the mind with mind. Until the mind is transcended, She cannot be attained. The intuitive experience of the Absolute consciousness and will is not discursive knowledge or knowledge derived from the scriptures (op. cit., i, 29-37, 41-54, pp. 494-96).

Saktaism and other forms of Nondualism or Monism.—Śāktaism and monistic Śaivaism both advocate idealistic monism, and regard Śiva-Śakti as the ultimate Reality, and the individual souls and the world as appearances which are not ultimately real. Śāktaism lays stress on Śakti, and regards Śiva as Her static, impersonal, and unconditioned aspect of the nature of mere manifestation (prakāśa) in Whose presence She creates, maintains and dissolves the world, and binds and liberates the individual souls, and inculcates the worship of Her for the attainment of liberation. Monistic Śaivaism lays stress on Śiva as endowed with the powers of volition, knowledge, action, binding and liberating the individual souls, and inculcates the worship of Him for the attainment of liberation. Both regard Śiva and Śakti—the Absolute and Divine Power or Energy—as nondifferent from each other, and enjoin the worship of both. Śaivaism enjoins the worship of Śiva as primary while Śāktaism enjoins that of Śakti as primary. Both admit thirty-six principles (tattva), and regard higher knowledge (jñāna) as the principal means of liberation.

Śāktaism and Śaṁkara's monism agree in advocating idealistic monism, regarding the individual souls and the world as the appearances of the Brahman, and emphasising higher knowledge as the principal means of liberation. But they

differ in that the former admits the reality of Śakti while the latter does not admit it. Śaṁkara admits māyā and regards it as neither real nor unreal but indefinable and ontologically unreal. Śāktaism regards māyā as a creation of Śakti. Both believe in cosmic nescience (māyā) and individual nescience (avidyā),—the former projecting the world of appearances (vikṣepa-śakti) and the latter veiling the nature of the Brahman (āvaraṇa-śakti). Śaṁkara's concept of the Brahman is similar to the Śākta's concept of Śiva as pure undifferentiated consciousness. Śaṁkara rejects the Śākta's concept of Śakti.

Śaktaism and Śābdika monism agree in holding that there are four stages of speech (vāk) : (1) parā, (2) paśyantī, (3) madhyamā, and (4) vaikharī. The former regards Śabdabrahma as the creation of Divine Power (śakti) while the latter regards it as the ultimate reality, and the individual souls and the world as its appearances. The former regards Divine Power as the cause of sounds (śabda) and objects (ar tha) while the latter regards Śabdabrahma as the cause of objects (HIP., Vol I, pp. 866-67). Śaivaism also admits four kinds of speech mentioned above ("Bhāratīya Sādhanār Dhārā",—Gopinātha Kavirāja, Calcutta, 1965, pp. 180-85).

The concept of Sakti in Vaisnavism.—Jīva Gosvāmī, a great Vaiṣṇava philosopper, propounds the doctrine of inconceivable identity-in-difference (achintya-bhedābheda), regards God (bhagavān) as devoid of homogeneous difference (sajātīyabheda), heterogeneous difference (vijātīyabheda), and internal difference (svagatabheda), and yet considers the individual souls as His real jīvaśaktī, and the world as the real modification of His unconscious māyāśakti, and regards them both as different and nondifferent from His essential powers (svarūpaśakti) of infinite being (sandhinī), consciousness (chit), and bliss (hlādinī) into which they cannot enter. His jīvaśakti is His marginal or intermediate power (taṭasthaśakti) of finite consciousness. His māyāśakti is the inferior power of insentience and unconsciousness. They are

His external powers (bahiraṅga-śakti), and remain outside His essential powers (antaraṅgaśakti). They are reconciled and harmonised in Him because of His inconceivable power (achityaśakti). He is the abode of contradictory qualities and dissimilar powers. How it is possible without internal difference in God is incomprehensible. Jīva Gosvāmī inculcates the worship of Durgā, Śrī (Lakṣmī), etc., as essential powers (svarūpaśakti) of God (Kṛṣṇa) as a subsidiary part of it, and regards devotion devoid of works and knowledge as the supreme means of liberation. He regards Brahman as an incomplete manifestation of God, but not indeterminate and unqualified as Śaṁkara thinks. He regards the individual souls as spiritual monads (aṇu), which are eternal dissimilar parts of God, and matter as unconscious. Śāktaism regards the souls as the unreal appearances of Śiva-Śakti and matter as dormant, coiled, involved power of consciousness (chitśakti), Śiva as indeterminate, undifferentiated, pure, consciousness, and Śakti as His power of 'I'-consciousness. Though Vaiṣṇavism is quite different from Śāktaism, yet it admits the realiiy of the powers (śakti) of God. (BS., 284, BHS.)

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Ramaprasada's Devotional Songs
the Cult of Shakti

Ramaprasada's Devotional Songs : the Cult of Shakti

[1]

O Supreme Divine Mother[1] ! the purifier of the fallen ! the giver of the fruit of supreme bliss !

O Consort of Śiva[2] ! give me The shade of Thy feet on an auspicious day.

O Deliverer ! O Mother ! grant me Thy grace through Thy cxcellence.

I am a sinner devoid of virtues, and utterly lacking in prayer.

O Mother of the universe ! save me from the wheel of becoming as the Saviour Tārā.

Thy feet are the boat to save us from the sea of birth and death.

O Consort of Śiva ! be gracious to Rāma Prasāda.

[1]Dynamic God, Divine Will. [2]Static Absolute.

[2]

Time will pass away, O Mother, only the story will remain ;

The story will persist ; it will endure ; O Mother, Thy disgrace will live for ever.

Either good or evil, Kālī, must be my fate.

What will dew drops do to one whose bed is in the sea ?

I am worn out with sufferings, Mother ; how much more miseries wilt Thou give me ?

Only Thy name, 'Durgā' or 'Kālī' will be disgraced.

[3]

O Mother! giver of food! give me food, give me food.
I know: mother gives food to her hungry child even if he is guilty at every step.
O Mother! give this child release[1] as Thy blessing without delay.
O Tārā, my pangs of hunger are unbearable; be not loath to grant me my prayer.

[1]Liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

[4]

O mind! be absorbed in the feet of Mother Who destroys all fears;
If thou want to be saved from great dangers and distress.
Meditate safely, O mind, on Her blessed feet, which destroy death;
On Whose greatness Śiva meditates,—the presence of presence[1] is impossible;
But the absence of absence[2] is easy;—Whose[3] wealth exists at every step.
O tongue! I earnestly request thee to say: "O Kālī, standing on Śiva as a corpse,
I pray Thee, O giver of gifts, grant Prasāda the coveted boon".

[1]Presence which already exists cannot be created. [2]Absence can be destroyed by producing presence. [3]Śiva.

[5]

O tongue! mutter the name of Kālī repeatedly.
He in whose heart Kālī is awake need not be convinced by reason[1];
It is only for his satisfaction that he seeks a jar or a picture[2] for worship.

Bring thy tongue under thy control, and let it taste the nectar of Kālī's name[3].

Chant[4] Her name, and drink its nectar; thou are quite fit for this simple task!

Kālī's name is full of nectar, the only abode of liberation;

Mutter Her name, counting its number with thy fingers; is it a difficult task for thee?

Let thy ears listen to Her qualities, and meditate[5] on the two letters 'Kā-lī'.

Prasāda says: "Spend thy time by muttering 'Kālī' and trust[6] thyself to Her".

[1]Suprarational Divine Power is to be experienced. [2]Symbol. [3]Repeated muttering of a name of God ends in the experience of Him and His bliss or delight. [4]Muttering and chanting a Divine name results in the experience of God. [5]Meditation on God is a most potent means. [6]Complete self-surrender to God.

[6]

O Mother! Thou art present in every form;

Thou art in the entire universe and in its tiniest and most trifling things.

Wherever I go and wherever I look,

I see Thee, Mother, present in thy cosmic form.

The whole world—earth, water, fire and air—

All are thy forms, O Mother, the whole world of birth and death.

"Mountains, plants, animals living on land and in water,

All moving and unmoving beings in this beautiful world", says Prasāda, "are full of Divine Will".

[7]

I live in a ramshackle hut[1]; so I call thee, Mother, in fright;

It is bent by a breeze; but it is supported by the strength of Kālī's name.

Six thieves[2] scale the mud wall and enter my hut at night ;
I can't overpower them, Mother, but flee them in fear.
But why ? Prasāda says, "To escape from being imprisoned by them".

[1]Body. [2]Passions.

[8]

Mind ! how am I, poor soul, to blame ?
Kālī ! Thou art a Magician ; I dance as Thou dancest me.
Thou art religious rites, virtue and vice ; this is Thy secret.
O Mother ! Thou art earth and water ; Thou makest the trees bear fruits.
Thou art Śakti[1], devotion and release—so Śiva declares.
O Mother ! Thou art joy and sorrow—as the *Chandi* has it.
Prasāda says : "The thread of life has been spun by the the wheel of *Karma*[2] ;
Mad Śiva[3] and mad Kālī[4] bind souls with the bond of Māyā[5] and make them play the life of samsāra."

[1]Divine Will and Energy. [2]Cosmic Law of Karma or Moral Law. [3]Impersonal static Absolute. [4]Personal dynamic Divine Will. [5]Cosmic nescience. [6]Cycle of birth and death due to ignorance (avidyā)

[9]

Blissful Divine Mother dwells in my heart and always plays there ;
I never forget Her name in whatever condition I live.
When I close my eyes, I see Her with a garland of skulls in my heart.
My wordly wisdom is gone ; all call me mad ;
Let them call me whatever they please ; let me get my mad Mother at the end.
Rāma Prasāda says, "Mother resides in my heart-lotus ;
Mother, I take refuge in Thy feet ; don't throw me out when I die".

[10]

Mother resides in every house[1];
Shall I disclose this secret in public?
She is bhairava[2] in a bhairavī's[3] company, a girl in a boy's company.
Sītā[4] in the company of Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma's[5] brother;
Mother, daughter, wife, sister, and other relations[6].

[1]Body of a creature. [2]Male worshipper of Divine Mother. [3]Female worshipper of Divine Mother. [4]Rāma's wife. [5]An Incarnation of God. [6]Divine Mother assumes the forms of all relations.

[11]

Kālī's name is very sweet;
Chant it always and drink its nectar.
O tongue! fie upon thee! still thou cravest for delicious fare!
The formless is the abode of all things formed.
Oh! what else is there than happiness, release, abode and name of God?
Gaṅgā[1] flows in his heart wherein Kālī is awake;
Even Śiva is under Her feet, who has conquered death.
Kindle the fire of knowledge in thy heart, and make virtue and vice[2] *ghee* for sacrifice;
Make thy mind bael leaves[3], and make thy efforts the sacrificial ladle.
Prasāda says, "The conflict of my heart is resolved;
This body belongs to the benign Kālī; there is a document endrosed by Her".

[1]Of nectar. [2]Virtue and vice both should be burnt in the fire of knowledge [3]To be offered to a sacrificial fire.

[12]

I shall take refuge in my Mother's feet; where shall I go at this time of my distress?
If there is no room for me at Her abode, I will lie outside; there is no harm in it.
Fasting with Her name as my support, I will lie outside Her abode.
Prasāda says: "I will not leave Her even if Umā[1] turns me out;
I will catch hold of Her feet with outstretched arms and give up my life".

[1]Durgā or Divine Mother.

[13]

O Tārā[1]! Thou art free Divine Will[2]; all happen at Thy will.
Thou actest in all our actions, though people say: "We act freely"[3].
Thou plungest an elephant in mud, and makest a cripple scale a mountain[4].
Thou givest some Brahmā's status, and layest others law.
I am an instrument; Thou art its mechanic; I am a house; Thou art its housewife.
I am a chariot; Thou art a charioteer; I act as Thou leadest me[5].
Prasāda says, "O mad mind! whom art thou afraid of?
I have sold this body[6] to the feet of the benign Kālī"[7].

[1]Divine Mother, the deliverer from bondage. [2]Dynamic Sakti of Siva, the Absolute. [3]Divine Will is the inner guide of the free human will, though it does not interfere with it. When human will is absolutely surrendered to it, it takes charge of the human will. [4]Make the impossible possible. [5]The poet has completely surrendered his will to the Divine Will. [6]He has surrendered his body, mind and soul to the Divine Will.

[14]

O mind! worship Kālī in any way[1] thou pleasest,
Uttering the *mantra*[2] given by Master[3] day and night.
Know thy lying as obeisance to Her, and meditate on Mother even while thou art asleep.
Oh! while thou roamest a town, think, thou walkest round Mother Kālī.
All sounds thou hearest are Her *mantras*.
Kālī is made of fifty letters, and bears Her name in every letter.
Rāma Prasāda says in wonder, "Divine Mother is in every creature.
Oh! while thou eatest, think, thou offerest an oblation to Her".

[1]There are three methods of Tāntric worship-paśvāchāra, vīrāchāra, and divyāchāra. [2]Mystic formula symbolic of God. [3]Spiritual guide who initiates a disciple in a spiritual discipline with a manatra.

[15]

O Mother! my desires are unfulfilled; my hopes are ungratified;
But my life is fast coming to an end.
Let me call Thee, Mother, for the last time;
Come and take me in Thy arms.
None loves in this world;
This world knows not how to love;
My heart yearns, O Mother, to go there,
Where love reigns supreme.
After intense suffering have I renounced my desires;
After intense agony have I cast aside my longings;
Bitterly have I wept and can weep no more!
O Mother, my heart rends and breaks asunder.

[16]

O tongue ! do utter 'Kālī', 'Kālī',
Meditate on Her feet ; drink the nectar of Her name, if thou hast desire to be saved.
Brothers, friends, wife, sons and relatives will not be thy companions for ever ;
They will be away when grim Death will overpower thee save Her blest feet.
Utter the name 'Durgā' once ; it is thy only stock in thy journey beyond death.
The saṁsāra is transient and unending ; all are unsubstantial ; why dost thou not ponder it ?
Time is wasted in vain ; why dost thou not see Death at thy door ?
"Well ! utter 'Kālī', 'Kālī', says Prasāda, "grim Death's agony shall vanish".

[17]

Will such a time come, O Tārā[1] !
When tears will stream from my eyes on uttering Thy name 'Tara' 'Tara', Tārā ;
When my heart-lotus[2] will bloom, minds' darkness will vanish, and I shall roll on the ground in ecstasy of joy[3] crying 'Tārā' ?
When I shall cast aside all distinctions[4], and my heart's pangs will disappear ?
O ! hundreds of scriptures declare : 'My Tārā is formless'[5].
Rāma Prasāda says, "Mother exists in all forms ;
O blind eyes ! do see Divine Mother ; She dispels all darkness[6] in the dark".

[1]Delverer. [2]Anāhata chakra. [3]Japa and chanting of a Divine name fills the soul with bliss [4]When the Divine is experienced, all distinctions vanish. [5]Divine Mother is formless and exists in all created beings. [6]She is the giver of light.

[18]

Oh ! who knows how Kālī looks, Who is beyond the ken of six philosophies[1] ?
Kālī[2] sports with Śiva[3] in the lotus-forest[4].
The yogī meditates on Her always in mūlādhāra[5] and sahasrāra[6].
Kālī is the Self of him who delights in the Self[7] : it is proved by thousands of proofs.
Tārā reigns in each creature at Her free will.
The universe is Her belly ; how big none knows !
Kālī alone knows Her works[8] ; who else can know them ?
"People laugh at my attempt", Prasāda says, "to cross the vast deep by swimming !
My soul knows, my heart delights ; albeit I be a dwarf, I try to catch at the moon !"

[1]Nyāya. Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṁsā, and Vedānta. [2]Divine Will (Śakti). [3]Absolute. [4]Suṣumnā within the spinal cord, which contains the six centres of esoteric consciousness (khakra). [5]The lowest chakra at the bottom of the Suṣumnā. [6]The highest chakra above the cerebrum in the middle. [7]Ātmārāma has conquered egoism and all desires and delights in the self only. [8]"Śiva knows Kālī's secret ; who else knows it so well ?" This is another reading.
(C. U. 1955)

[19]

O mind, I entreat Thee to utter 'Kālī' ;
Forget it not at the proper time.
Renounce all wealth, and worship Kālī Who is Brahman, forsooth.
Oh ! be absorbed in Her lotus-feet ; four fruits[1] thou shalt get with ease.
Thy abode[2] is guarded by the agents[3] of Death ;
Oh ! thou canst not escape his noose.

Twice-born[4] Rāma Prasāda says, "Thon hast missed thy work under the malign influence of time ;

Oh ! unless thou worship Her now, thou shalt eat dry slices when mango season is over[5] !

[1]Wealth, happiness, virtue, and emancipation. [2]Body. [3]Passions. [4]Invested with sacred thread and initiated in Gāyatrī and spiritual discipline. [5]Miss a harvest of delight.

[20]

O tongue ! utter forcefully 'Kālī' 'Tārā' once ?

Oh ! why art thou afraid of Death ?

Why should he go to Gayā or Kāsī[1], in whose heart Kālī is always awake ?

Why should he perform any religious rites, who knows Her real nature ?

He had a subtle desire for sādhanā[2] and a strong desire for release ;

Rāma Prasāda is perplexed and torn by conflicting thoughts.

[1]Place of pilgrimage [2]Spiritual practices.

[21]

O mind ! utter 'Kālī', 'Kālī'.

Why dost thou not utter Kālī's name, Who destroys all dangers ? Why dost thou forget it ?

Be not least frightened at the sight of the vast deep.

Oh ! Kālī shall take thee across the sea of saṁsāra with ease.

O mind ! do'nt mind ; what is past is dead and gone ; time is wasted in vain pursuits ; utter 'Kālī' without regret.

Cross the sea of saṁsāra throwing dust into Death's eyes.

Rāma Prasāda says, "O mind ! why dost thou forget Her ?

Mutter Kālī's name[1] in mind ; thy time is coming to an end".

[1]Japa or repeated muttering or remembering a name of God is the easiest means of salvation.

[22]

O mind! why art thou so anxious?
Sit once, utter 'Kālī' 'Kālī' and meditate on Her.
If thou worship Her with pomp, thou wilt became proud
at heart.
Worship Her in secret, unknown to the world.
What is the use of making an Image of a metal, stone
or earth?
Make a mental Image and set it on the lotus of thy heart.
What is the use of procuring sunned rice and ripe
plantains?
Offer Her mentally the nectar of thy devotion, and fill Her
to Her heart's content.
What is the use of the light of candles, lanterns and
chandeliers?
Kindle the gem of thy heart, and let it shed its lustre
day and night.
What is the use of sacrificing sheep, goats and buffaloes?
Sacrifice thy six passions,[1] crying '*Jai*[2] for Kālī'.
"What is the use of drums?" says Prasāda,
"Clap thy hands, crying '*Jai*'[2] for Kālī', and fix thy mind
on Her blessed feet".

[1]Lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy. [2]Victory.

[23]

O mind! call Mother Kālī and have devotion and release
in the hollow of thy palms.
Give up the pride of wealth, and worship Her lotus-feet.
Disappoint Death; listen to my advice.
Mutter gracious Kālī's name; thy desires will be fulfilled;
Half the day live in joy and bliss.
Rāma Prasāda Sen says, "Conquer thy six passions;
Shake off fear, beat a drum in joy, and reach thy goal".

[24]

Chanting Kālī's glory and clapping thy arms,[1]
Row thy body-boat quickly;
Make thy mind boat-man; be not afraid of the ocean of saṁsāra.
South wind[2] at thy back is favourable; Death will look at thee baffled[3].
Śiva is not a liar; supernatural powers[4] shall be thy servants[5].
Prasāda says, "Thy enemy will run away".

[1]Rejoice for success. [2]God's grace. [3]Death will be overcome. [4]Becoming minute, large, light, heavy, fulfilment of all desires, subjecting others to one's will, and sovereignty. [5]A true seeker of God does not care for them, but only for God-realization.

[25]

Of what use is my going to Kāśi any more?
At Mother's feet lie Gayā, Gaṅgā and Kāśi.
I swim in the ocean of bliss while I meditate on Her in my heart-lotus[1].
O! Kālī's feet are red lotuses wherein lie heaps of holy places[2].
All sins are destroyed by Kālī's name, as heaps of cotton are burnt by fire.
How can a headless[3] man have a headache[4]?
People think, they will discharge their debts to forefathers by offering them piṇḍa[5] at Gayā!
But, Oh! I laugh at his going to Gayā, who meditates on Kālī!
Śiva assures: "Death at Kāśī leads to salvation".
But devotion is the root of all; O mind! salvation is its maid[6].
Of what use is nirvāṇa[7]? Water mingles in water.
O mind! becoming sugar[8] is not desirable; I am fond of eating sugar[9].

Bemused Rāma Prasāda says, "By the strength of gracious Mother,
Oh ! meditation on Her of dishevelled hair brings four goods[10] to our palms.

[1]Anāhata chakra. [2]Constant meditation on God makes pilgrimage to holy places useless. [3]Sinless. [4]Sin. [5]Lumps of rice or flour offered to ancestral spirits. [6]Devotion, desirless, undivided, supreme love for God, is superior to salvation or God-realization. Such devotion is devotion as an end according to Bengal Vaiṣṇavism. This cult finds expression in Bengal Śaktaism also. [7]Merging of the soul in God. [8]Becoming identical with God. [9]Enjoying the supreme delight of God. [10]Wealth, happiness, virtue, and salvation.

[26]

O Kālī ! I shall keep Thee in Kālī—sheath[1] this time, and know Thee well.
She is dancing Kālī and restless ; how shall I keep Her therein ?
I shall dance Her on my heart-lotus[2], playing on my mind-lyre.
O mind ! I shall tell Thee how to get Kālī's blessed feet.
Six passions[3] I shall sacrifice, which give me great trouble.
Meditating on Kālī, becoming Kālī[4], and muttering 'Kālī', I shall spend my time.
I shall blacken the face of death, and depart[5] for ever.
Prasāda says, "Why, Mother ! dost Thou make me suffer any more ? What more shall I disclose ?
I suffer all Thy blows[6] without murmur, and yet I will never cease uttering 'Kālī'[7].

[1]Suṣumnā from mūlādhāra to sahasrāra. [2]Anāhata chakra. [3]Lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and envy. [4]The soul (jīva) becomes God (Śiva or Kālī). [5]Become immortal. [6]Assualts of misfortune. God is the giver of fortune and misfortune. [7]japa and constant recollection of God's name.

[27]

O mind! dive into the bottomless depth of the ocean of thy heart, uttering 'Kālī'.

Think not the ocean empty, if thou fail to get a gem in a few dives.

Dive at one breath to the Serpent Power[1].

The pearl of Śakti[2], O mind, is born at the depth of the ocean of knowledge.

If thou seek for Her with devotion, following Śiva's[3] advice, thou art sure to get Her.

Six crocodiles[4] like lust always infest it in quest of prey.

Rub thy body with the turmeric paste of discrimination[5]; they will not touch thee when they smell it.

Countless gems lie at the bottom of the ocean.

Rāma Prasāda says, "If thou plunge into the ocean, thou art sure to get gems[6] every minute".

[2]Kulakuṇḍalinī or cosmic energy in mūlādhāra. Sri Aurobindo calls it yogaśakti. [2]Divine Mother or Power. [3]Śiva is the exponent of the Śākta Tantras. [4]Passions. [5]Discrimination between the eternal self and the non-eternal body or not-self. [6]Peace, light, knowledge, power, delight, etc., accompanying God-realization.

[28]

Mutter Kālī's name constantly, and thou shalt go to Kālī.

Her devotee is released in life in whatever state he exists.

Śrīnātha[1], the ocean of mercy, friend of the destitute and distressed, showed me Kālī's lotus-feet, the wish-giving tree.

Lakṣmī[2] incarnate is at home; Sarasvatī[3] is at the tip of the tongue;

Śiva[4] and Durgā[5] will protect thee day and night.

A *yogin* craves union with God; a householder craves earthly pleasures;

But Mother desire for Her devotees both worldly enjoyment and divine union[6].
Prasāda says in joy, "Kālī's" devotee shall be victorious;
Siddhis[7] will execute his commands and will be left behind.

[1]The poet's spiritual guide. [2]Goddess of fortune and wealth. [3]Goddess of Learning and fine arts. [4]Divine Father. [5]Divine Mother. [6]Divine Mother gives both happiness and salvation. The cult of Śakti seeks after transformation of earthly life by the experience of God. [7]Occult powers are automatically acquired by the worship of Divine Mother, but they are subordinated to perfect attunement with God's Will.

[29]

Come, O mind, let us sit in solitude.
And lay our heads together; we shall imprison Master's feet[1] in a cage[2].
We shall hide the feet and drink their nectar[3]; what do we care for Death?
My mind says, "I will steal them; but I find no clue".
How can I spend the treasure[4], secure feet[5] given by my Master?
Rāma Prasāda hopes: "Let me clear the path by cutting down thorns[6];
I shall go to the city of honey[7] and drink honey[8], cherishing Master's name[9] in my heart".

[1]Spiritual guide's *mantra* or mystic formula or divine name surcharged with divine power awakened by his spiritual discipline. [2]Heart. [3]Divine bliss enshrined in the *mantra*. [4]*mantra* symbolic of God. [5]God who is the safe refuge. [6]Fetters of maya, ignorance of the true nature of self, false conceit of 'I' and 'mine' in the mind-body-complex. [7]God's eternal abode of infinite bliss. [8]Divine bliss. [9]*mantra*.

[30]

Look here ! all these are the Woman's[1] play ; She plays a secret[2] play for Herself.

She creates a conflict between qualified God[3] and unqualified Brahman[4], and breaks a stone with a stone[5]

The Woman is ready to give all other boons[6], but loth to give the most coveted boon[7].

Prasāda says, "Set afloat the raft on the ocean of saṁsāra and wait ;

And row up the tide and down the ebb"[8].

[1]Kālī, Divine Mother. [2]Inscrutable. [3]Brahman (Absolute) qualified by cosmic nescience (māyā) and invested with attributes. [4]Attributeless Brahman unqualified by māyā. [5]Resolves the conflict playfully. The Divine is both unqualified and qualified, static and dynamic, acosmic cosmic, formless and formed, and experienced as such by a mystic. [6]Wealth, happiness and virtue (dharma). [7]Her blessed feet—experience of divine bliss.

[31]

O mind ! Let us go for a walk.

To the foot of the wish-giving tree[1] of Kālī where thou wilt get four fruits[2].

Of your two wives, enjoyment and renunciation[3], take renunciation only with thee.

Oh ! ask discrimination[4], thy eldest son, if thou want to know any truth about reality.

Live happily with purity and impurity—thy wives.

When both will be overpowered[5], thou shalt get Mother Kālī.

Drive away the darkness of nescience, thy step-mother.

If she drags thee into the pit of delusion[7], hold fast to the post of patience[8].

Virtue and vice[9] are two she-goats ; tie them fast to the trifling sacrificial post.

If they disobey thy commands, sacrifice them with the sword of knowledge[10].
Command thy first wife's children[11] to keep at a distance.
If they are not consoled, plunge them in the ocean of knowledge[12].
Prasāda says, "If thou can do so, thou wilt give proper answer to Death[13].
Then, O darling, thou wilt be mind after my heart.

[1]Divine Mother fulfils all desires. [2]Wealth, happiness, virtue, and salvation. [3]Desire for earthly pleasures and desire to renounce them and yearn for beautitude. They are also called impurity and purity respectively. [4]Discrimination of the self and the not-self, the eternal and the non-eternal. [5]Realization of Divine Mother depends upon the realization that all purity and impurity—are expressions of Her Will. [6]Avidyā, ignorance which creates false egoism, the sense of 'I' and 'mine' in the mind-body-complex. [7]Non-discrimination of self and not-self. [8]Firm patience generates discrimination which destroys delusion. [9]Vice should be conquered by virtue; then both man-made relative virtue and vice should be surrendered to Divine Mother and transcended in the experience of Divine Bliss. [10]Relative distinction of virtue and vice is transcended by the true knowledge of Divine Mother permeating all. [11]All sins born of the desire (pravṛtti) for earthly enjoyments. [12]They are consumed by the saving Knowledge. [13]You can attain immortality (amṛta) life eternal.

[32]

O mind! thou knowest not the art of tilling.
Such (fertile) field as human nature lies fallow; it would yield gold[1] if it were tilled properly.
Fence it off with Kālī's name[2]; crops will never be lost or forfeited.
The ence made of Kālī's name is strong;
O mind! Death will not dare approach it.
Do know: crops will never be forfeited[3] in a day, a year, or a century.
The field is under your power[4]; grow plenty of crops and reap a rich harvest.

Master[5] hath sown seeds[6] ; do irrigate[7] thy field with the water of devotion.

If thou can't do it alone, (O my mind !)
Call Rāma Prasāda to help thee.

[1]Rich harvest, spiritual advancement. [2]Divine name is a sure means of God-realization. [3]Spiritual equipment is a permanent asset. [4]Man's God-realization lies within his power ; he can attain life divine or the reverse by undergoing spiritual discipline or by acquiring demoniac vices. [5]Spiritual guide. [6]*Mantra,* divine name charged with spiritual power. [7]Mutter and remember the *mantra,* think of its meaning, and meditate on the Divine represented by it with devotion.

[33]

O (Mother) ! I shall till the human field in this birth.
O Queen ! shower drops of grace[1] on it, sit by and watch.
O Mother ! the body-field is full of weeds ;
What power have I to till the whole of it ?
(O Mother !) if I can till a part of it, I shall swim in an ocean of joy.
There are heaps of sins as weeds in my heart ;
O Mother of dishevelled hair ! cut them off with a sharp billhook.
Six bullocks of passions[2] plough the field day and night.
I shall sow the seeds[3] given by Master[4] and reap heaps of crops.
Rāma Prasāda says, "My desire for tilling the body-field[5] is not very earnest.
O Mother ! my heart yearns for being merged[6] in Thy rosy feet".

[1]Spiritual discipline does not bear fruit without the grace of God. [2]Lust, anger, etc. [3]*Mantra.* [4]*Guru.* [5]Spiritual practices. [6]Absorption in God.

[34]

O Death ! get off ; what canst thou do ? I have imprisoned Mother Kālī.
I have fettered Her feet with my mind-chain and secured Her in my heart-prison.
I have unfolded my heart-lotus[1] and fixed my mind at sahasrāra.[2]
I have entrusted my heart to Kulakuṇḍalinī[3].
Such contraption have I made that She can't escape !
Devotion guards it always as a watchman ; my two eyes have I made gatekeepers.
I foreknew : fateful fever[4] would attack me ;
So have I taken my Master's drug[5]—panacea for all diseases.
"Death ! I have humbled thy pride", says Rāma Prasāda,
"I am ready to start on my journey[6], uttering 'Kālī', 'Kālī'.

[1]Heart-lotus is a potent *chakra* or centre of mystic experience, the seat of Divine Power as Inner Guide (Antaryāmin). [2]The highest *chakra*, a thousand-petalled lotus at the top of the head, the seat of the manifest Divine Power. [3]Dormant Divine Power coiled in Mūlādhāra at the base of the spinal cord. [4]Causing death. [5]*Mantra* given by the spiritual guide. [6]Beyond death.

[35]

O Death ! don't touch me ; I lost my caste
When gracious Mother blest me with Her grace[2].
O Death ! listen ; let me tell thee how I lost my caste.
I was a householder ; Kālī made me an ascetic[3] and ruined me.
O Death ! my mind and tongue band and utter Kālī's name constantly ;
On hearing it six passions[4] have fled.
The strength, which made me an outcaste, is still intact in me.

Prasāda says, "When an outcaste[5] dies, Death must not approach him".

[1]God of death. [2]Śāktaism believes in the doctrine of grace. [3]The poet mentally renounced the world, but did not become a monk. [4]Passions are easily conquered by constantly muttering and remembering God's name. [5]A devote of God to whom grace is extended has attained immortality.

[36]

Get off, O messenger of Death; I am son of Divine Mother.
Ask thy King how many he has captured like me.
I can be the killer of Death, if I meditate on Mother's lustre.
Prasāda says, O minion of Death! hold thy tongue.
If I bind thee fast with Kālī's name and punish thee, who will save thee[1]?

[1]Death can be conquered by muttering God's name constantly.

[37]

I stand firm, drawing a boundary line[1] with Kālī's name[2].
Listen, O Death, I tell thee: I was not prematurely born;
Why should I bear thy threats?
Thou canst not snatch and devour me as if I were a sweetmeat in a child's hand, by a threat!
If thou speak harsh words to me, thou must be punished as I shall tell Mother.
Kālī is, forsooth, the Destroyer of Death[4]; She is a very mad Goddess!
Rāma Prasāda says, "Chanting Kālī's glory I shall throw dust into thy eyes and escape from thy clutches".

[1]Death cannot cross it. [2]It is a means to immortality. [3]I am not a weakling. [4]Divine Mother can make Her devotee immortal by bestowing Her grace on him.

[38]

Wait for a moment, O Death, let me call Divine Mother to my heart's content.
Let me see if Divine Mother comes in my distress.
Thou wilt take me away; why art thou anxious for it?
In vain do I wear a garland and an amulet of Tārā's name[1] round my neck (if I fear thee).
Divine Mother is my sovereign; I am Her direct subject[2].
Sometimes am I distressed, and sometimes prosperous; but my rent is never in arrear[3].
"This is Mother's play", says Prasāda, inscrutable[4] to others;
Can I fathom its mystery, which even thee-eyed Śiva[5] could not[6]"?

[1]A devote strengthened by God's name can conquer death. [2]He knows himself to be under God's direct government,—not under any human authority. [3]He is always firm in his devotion to God in prosperity and adversity. [4]Divine Mother's play with Her children whom She caresses and chastises is incomprehensible to common people. [5]Even the impersonal Absolute immersed in supreme existence-consciousness-bliss (saccidānanda) cannot understand the play of the personal Divine Mother with Her devotees. [6]The song is said to have been sung by the poet before his death in the Gaṅgā.

[39]

O mind! wherefore does thou deem thyself destitute?
Oh! thou knowest not how foolish thou art.
Thou wanderest from place to place in quest of transitory wealth.
But thou missest the wish-giving gem[1] treasured in thy house.
If thou be true mind, ferret it out by meditation[2].
When thy ajapā[3] will be completed, thou wilt not be overpowered by the venom of Death.

Tie up carefully the purse of gems[4] given by thy Master,[5]
If thou hope to win the secure feet of Divine Mother;
—This is poor Rāma Prasāda's humble entreaty.

[1]Divine Mother dwelling in the heart—the giver of all boons. [2]Concentration on Her at the centres of mystical Consciousness and meditation on Her. [3]Respiration. Breath which emits the sound 'haṁsa' without one's effort turns into 's'ham' (That I am)—"I am Brahman" by spiritual discipline. [4]*Mantra.* [5]Spiritual guide.

[40]

O mind! ponder: none is our own; in vain dost thou wander about in this world.
All call a person, master for a short while in this world.
But they cast him away when Death overtakes him.
Will thy near and dear ones accompany thee beyond death for whom thou art so anxious?
Thy beloved wife will clean the ground[1] lest evil should befall her!
Rāma Prasāda says, "When Death will drag thee by the hair,
Utter 'Kālī' 'Kālī'; what harm can Death do to thee?"

[1]Where your dead body lay. [2]Divine name is a strong armour against the attack of death.

[41]

Is She an ordinary Woman[1],
Muttering Whose name Śiva survives drinking deadly poison[2]?
She creates, preserves and destroys the world at a glance[3];
She keeps the endless universe within Her belly;
Taking refuge in Whose feet gods are saved from dangers;
Under Whose feet lies Śiva, Lord of gods.

Prasāda says, "Goddess of war roams the battle-field.
To kill Śumbha and Niśumbha[4] with an outcry.

[1]Kāli. [2]There is a story in Hindu mythology. The ocean of milk was churned by Gods and demons, from which nectar and deadly poison emerged. Gods drank nectar, and Śiva drank poison which turned His throat blue. [3]By mere fiat of will. [4]Demons. The Chaṇḍī gives this story.

[43]

This world is the treasury of happiness.
One gets treasure[1] as one's mind[2] is ; O ! cultivate thy mind.
O mind ! thou art of little knowledge ; thou hast superficial[3] knowledge of things.
Oh ! Why dost thou not meditate[4] on Mother Kālī's blessed feet, like Śiva ?
King Janaka was a sage without any blemish.
He was true to heaven and earth[5] and could get a cup of milk[5] to drink.

[1]Earthly happiness or experience of Divine bliss or both. [2]Desire for enjoyment gives happiness ; desire for renunciation gives emancipation ; yearning for God permeating the world gives both. [3]Knowledge of difference is superficial ; but knowledge of identity-in-difference is profound. [4]Meditation on God abiding in all beings is the essence of the spiritual discipline. [5]He was "true to the kindred points of heaven and home". (Wordsworth). He did all his earthly duties and experienced God in them ; he enjoyed earthly happiness and divine bliss ; he attained embodied liberation (jīvanmukti).

[44]

O Kālī ! Do this when Death overtakes me ;
When Death encircles me at the right moment, reveal Thyself to me in my heart-lotus.
Let not my mind forget Master[1]-given wealth[2] at the sight of Death.
Prasāda says, "Let my tongue utter 'Kālī' in the Gaṅgā[3] at the end".

[1]Spiritual guide. [2]*Mantra.* [3]Pious Hindus used to die in the holy river ; they used to be taken there before death.

[44]

I labour hard like a wageless labourer of a ghost ; I have
no money in my little purse.

I am a public porter and labour hard without wages.

I work as a daily labourer ; five elements consume what
I earn.

Five elements, six passions and ten senses are extremely
quarrelsome.

They are deaf to others' counsels. My days are numbered.

As a blind person holds a lost staff tightly when it is
regained,

So I want to hold Thee tightly, Mother, but lose grip of
Thee due to ill-luck.

Prasāda says, O Divine Mother ! cut my bond of Karma[1].

Let my soul depart, O Mother, through my brahmarandra[2]
at the time of death".

[1]Merits and demerits. [2]An aperture at the top of the head through which a released soul departs.

[45]

Who will explain to thee everyday ? O obstinate mind !
thou refusest to understand it.

Where will thy homestead remain ? Where will thy building
remain ?

When Death will come and tie thee fast, O mind, where
will thy uncles remain ?

They will give thee an earthen pitcher and a torn mat
after death.

Oh ! there is a sealed book[1] there in thy name.

All wealth and relatives are unavailing ; who will accompany
thee ?

Rāma Prasāda says, "Remove the agony of rebirth by
muttering 'Durgā'[2].

[1]Record of virtues and sins. [2]Divine name is a sovereign remedy for birth and death.

[46]

What is the need of going to Kāśī[1] ? Kālī's blessed feet abound in heaps of release[2]

Three hundred and fifty million holy places live at Mother's blessed feet.

If thow know how to pray, and believe in the scriptures[3], what is the need of living at Kāśī ?

Meditate[4] on Kālī with four hands and unbraided hair in thy heart-lotus[5].

O Rāma Prasāda, thou shalt get Kāśī[6] at home day and night.

[1]A place of pilgrimage especially sacred to the worshippers of Śākti (Divine Mother), where there are the temples of Śiva (Viśveśvara) and Durgā (Annapūrṇā). [2]From birth and death. [3]Vedas, Tantras, etc. [4]Meditation is the essence of prayer. [5]Meditation on God in the heart-centre (anāhata chakra) is the potent means of the revelation of Him as the Supreme Self (Paramātman) or Inner Controller (Antaryāmin). [6]God will always be revealed to you in the heart at home.

[47]

O mind ! I entreat thee to recite what I teach thee like a trained bird.

Learn what I teach thee ; one who learns lessons lives in comfort.

Oh ! dost thou not know the saying : one who learns not is beaten by a big stick.

Utter 'Kalī', 'Kālī', O mind, and delight in Kālī's blessed feet.

Oh ! utter Her name, delight in thy Self, and achieve thy salvation.

Wherefore dost thou fly about and roam the earth in vain ?

Oh ! how many days canst thou live on fruits of plants ? Listen to my advice—try to get the four ends[7] of life from thyself.[2]

Prasāda says, "Thou shalt get fruits from a tree[3] that has brone fruits. Listen to my advice".

Oh ! sit at its root[4], mutter 'Kālī', and shake[5] it every day.

[1]Wealth, happiness, virtue and release. [2]By sādhanā. [3]Ṣuṣumnā, brahmanāḍī, where Divine Power lives. [4]Mūlādhāra. [5]Awaken, activate.

R. D. S. 4

[48]

O gracious Goddess ! who calls Thee merciful ?
Some drink milk with sugar, O Tārā !
I can't get even rice with cooked potherb—such is my misfortune !
O Mother ! thou hast given some wealth, attendants, elephants, horses and chariots.
Oh ! are They thy father's preceptors[1] ? Am I none to Thee ?
Some live in mansions ; I too desire to live so.
O Mother ! did I destroy Thy rich harvest[2] ?
Dwija Rāma Prasāda says, "I am so unfortunate,
That, O Mother Kālī, Thou hast become stony[3] on seeing my misfortune" !

[1]Very respectable and dear. [2]Do the greatest harm. [3]Callous.

[49]

O Mother ! Thou wast in my heart, but perchance thou didst depart seeing me guilty.
Was it worth noticing ? Thou didst notice it because Thou art my mother !
If thou be guilty or blameless[1], what fault didst Thou find with me ?
When Thou art mad, Thou becomest fierce—to speak the truth.
Hast Thou kept Śiva's words, O Mother, in cold storage ?
Rāma Prasāda says in fear with tearful eyes,
"I live as Thou keepest me[2] ; then what blemish didst Thou find in me ?"

[1]Mother is responsible for her child's excellence or guilt. Ultimately Divine will is the root of human virtue and vice. [2]I do as I am impelled by Divine Mother to do.

[50]

O mind! be not misled by others' taunts; let them call thee a drunkard[1].
Oh! I drink not liquor; I drink nectar[2] in joy.
Today my mind is intoxicated with Divine Bliss, albeit drunkards[3] call me a drunkard!
Sit day and night at the feet of Śiva's Consort.
Otherwise thou wilt be intoxicated and bewildered, if thou drink the wine of pleasure of objects.
Cosmic egg floats on the elixir of wine purified by *mantra*.
She is the deliverer of the low-born, the cause of nobility; leave not thy mode of prayer[4] at others' instigation.
Three are born of three guṇas[5]; they are called intoxicants because of delusion.
O mind! *sattva* produces virtue; *tamas*, ignorance; and *rajas*, action.
When thou wilt be intoxicated[6], thou wilt be out of tune[7], and Divine Bard[8] will take thee on Her lap.
Rāma Prasāda says, "If thou discard thy mode of prayer in old age, thou wilt be fallen from society.

[1]The poet used to drink a little wine at the time of prayer as prescribed by the Śākta cult at the middle stage. [2]Divine Bliss. [3]Drunken with sensuous pleasure. [4]Śākta. [5]Sattva, rajas and tamas. [6]With Divine Bliss. [7]With the world; you will transcend social virtue and vice. [8]Divine Mother.

[51]

I am undone with brooding! how can five mad ones live together?
Mother[1] is mad; Father[2] is mad; two disciples[3] are mad.
Mother! I have become almost mad, meditating on Thy secure feet.
Who hath seen such a mad Goddess[4] who holds Her feet on the heart-lotus of Her Husband[5];
Who leaves golden Kāśī for cremation grounds?

To whom shall I disclose the secret of my home? Like
Father like Mother.
Oh! who else is there who wears a necklace of heads?
Prasāda says, "I am bewildered at the sight of all these!
O Mother! do whatever Thou deemest fit; but Thou
must destroy my fear of Death[6]".

[1]Kālī. [2]Śiva. [3]Nandī and Bhṛṅgī. [4]Kālī. [5]Śiva. [6]Release from birth and death.

[52]

Well! Mother! Thine is a good counsel!
Dost Thou desire me to till my court-yard[1]?
Six contending soldiers[2] have entered into my dear house[3],
and are playing the foe.
They drag me to their side, and show me ingratitude.
Two prices[4] Thou hast fixed in the same market! What
kind of judgment[5] is this?
Thou mixest sand with some persons' cooked potherb; but
Thou mixest sugar with others' milk[6]!
Prasāda says, "Wilt Thou tell me? My tongue wants to
ask Thee something.
There is Thy mighty rod on my head[7]! My mind has
comprehended it, but my heart refuses to do so[8]."

[1]Live in poverty. [2]Passions. [3]Body. [4]Different lots for the same actions. [5]Unjust. [6]Differnt lots. [7]Persecution. [8]Because it shows that Thou art cruel.

[53]

I have got a behest to kill Death from Mother Kālī's
high authority.
Mother hath given me an infallible arrow[1] which I have
kept in the quiver of my heart.
I have made it sharp by carefully muttering[2] Her name.
I have vanquished the two[3] who tried to break my house.

This time I will kill Death and depart—I am resolved on this imperative duty.
Rāma conquered Laṅkā by worshipping Her feet with blue lilies.
I worshipped them with lotuses[4], and declare with the beat of a drum my conquest of Death.
Prasāda says, "Have I merged myself in Her secure feet willingly for nothing?
I have dedicated my life to Her feet, because I shall die unless I take refuge in Her".

[1]Mantra. [2]Japa. [3]Attachment and egoism. [4]Awakened Divine Power at the chakras by meditation.

[54]

Be not idle in muttering Mother's name;
O tongue! whatever may betide thee.
Thou hast suffered grief, O mind! thou shalt suffer more.
Wilt thou sink thy boat at the sight of huge waves,
Because thou didst not get earthly happiness?
Keep that name always in thy heart;
Mutter that name while lying or dreaming[1].
Be always awake[2], O my mind!
Utter 'Kālī' when thou wilt leave this body.

[1]While awake or asleep. [3]Alive to the experience of God; with Divine Power awakened.

[55]

O mind! do love Her[1],
Who can take thee across the sea of birth and death.
Make a firm resolve; the net-work of relations is worthless.
Hopes from wealth and relatives are unavailing. Hast thou forgotten thy past history?
Where wast thou? Where hast thou come? Whither wilt thou go?

In this world thou assumest a disguise[2] and dancest, impelled by a mysterious power[3].
Thou art on the lap of cosmic nescience[4], and confined in a prison[5].
To egoism, hate, love, and attachment to favourable objects—
For what reason hast thou given the kingdom of thy body ?
There is no remedy for this ! The day[6] is nearly at an end.
Meditate on Durgā always in the abode of Śiva[7] in the island of gems.
Prasāda says, "The name of Durgā is full of nectar and the abode of beatitude.
Mutter it incessantly and drench thy tongue in nectar.

[1]Durgā, Divine Mother. [2]Your real nature as divine or a child of Divine Mother is unknown to you. [3]Māyā which produces the world of appearances. [4]Māyā. [5]The world-appearance is a prison from which there is no escape without the knowledge of God underlying it. [6]Life. [7]Sahasrāra, the highest chakra at the top of the head in the centre where God lives as fully manifest,—the seat of the highest God-realizaiion.

[56]

I have dedicated my life to Her[1] secure feet.
Am I afraid of Death any longer ?
The wish-giving tree[2] of Kālī's name I have planted in my heart.
I have sold my body in the world-mart, and bought the name of Durgā.
I abide in the house of the good person[3] in my body.
When Death will come this time, I will open my heart to him this time : I have determined.
The name 'Tārā' is the essence of Reality, which I have tied to my śikhā[4].
Rāma Prasāda says, "I am ready to start on my journey to the other world, uttering "Durgā"[5].

[1]Kāli's. [2]Kāli's name gives all boons to a devotee. [3]A good person and a bad person, good disposition and bad disposition, live in the same body. [4]Ā long tuft of hair on the crown of the head. [5]Kālī, Tārā and Durgā are names of Divine Mother.

[57]

Oh ! I shall be misled no more if thou wheedle me.
I have taken refuge in Mother's secure feet ; I shall neither tremble in fear nor vacillate in my course of action ;
Nor shall I fall into the well of poison, being attached to objects of pleasure ;
Nor shall I kindle the fire of mind, deeming joy and sorrow to be equal ;
Nor shall I go from door to door, being mad in greed of wealth ;
Nor shall I disclose the secret of my mind under the influence of mad hope ;
Nor shall I hang on the tree of love[1], being tied to the chains of Māyā[2] ;
Rāma Prasāda says, "Milk[3] have I drunk, and shall not drink whey[4] and spoil my taste".

[1]Earthly love due to delusion. [2]Attachment due to ignorance (avidyā). [3]Divine Bliss. [4]Pleasure of the senses.

[58]

Is She only Śiva's Consort[1]
To whom Destroyer[2] of Death makes obeisance ?
She lives in lotuses[3], moving in six lotuses.
She lives in the thousand-petalled lotus[4], the master of all petals.
She destroys the foes as naked Kālī, and dwells in the heart of Śiva[5].
O mind ! tell me why She kicks Her husband in the chest.
Prasāda says, "This is Mother's play I know all Her acts to be a false show[6].
O mind ! exert thyself with great care ; thou wilt have pure intelligence[7].

[1]Satī. [2]Śiva. [3]Chakras. [4]Sahasrāra. [5]Śiva enshrines Her in His heart. [6]Kālī standing on the chest of Siva is a symbol only. [7]Which manifests the essential nature of Reality.

[59]

Take care! take care! the boat[1] is about to sink.
O my forgetful mind! the day[2] is declining; thou hast not worshipped Śiva's Consort[3].
Thou hast filled thy boat with freight bought in the world-mart fraudulently.
Thou didst waste the whole day at the landing place, and begin to row thy boat at eve.
Thy boat is weather-beaten; it has become heavy with sins.
If thou want to cross the sea of birth and death, make Mother[4] thy helmsman.
Six oarsmen[5] have fled at the sight of huge breakers.
O mind! make Master[6] and Brahman[7] the be-all and end-all of thy life; Prasāda is obedient to his Mother.

[1]Body. [2]Life. [3]Durgā or Kali. [4]Divine Mother. [5]Five sense-organs and mind. [6]Guru. [7]Divine Mother.

[60]

O Deliverer! deliver Thy son from birth and death.
O Tārā! I am overwhelmed with therefold[1] sufferings day and night.
Don't make me cry constantly again and again in vain.
O Mother, destroyer of sorrow, destroy miseries of Thy unworthy son.
No more shall I be duped by rosy fruits of this world[2].
I have partaken of them, and found them to be devoid of sweet taste.
They are full of poison and produce bad effects if they are eaten.
If I eat them, I become senseless. Lest I forget Thee,
O Mother! don't give Thy son bad fruits, being his Mother.
I am always mad, O Mother, with what I call mine.
Sense-organs, wife, sons—all I deem as 'mine'[3].

But where am 'I'? I cant't find 'I' in my meditation.
Tell me by what path, O Mother, I shall go to find 'I' out.
Don't keep poor Rāma Prasāda in illusion any more,
O Mother[5]!

[1]Physical, mental and supernatural. [2]Of birth and death. [3]Due to ignorance and attachment. [4]The sense of 'I' and 'mine' is due to ignorance (avidyā). The soul is really divine or a child Divine Mother. It is a transcendent spirit—not physical, vital. or mental.

[61]

What wealth can I give Thee?
I closed mine eyes and saw—O Mother,—'the universe is Thine'.
What is the good, Mother, of giving Thee gems and clothes?
The mine of gems[1] is Thy servant.
Thou art Annapūrṇa[2] and livest in the golden city of Kāśi.
Who calls Śiva a beggar, Whose treasurer is Kuverā[3]",
Rāma Prasāda says, "At whose door Brahmā[4] and Viṣṇu[5] are supplicants for His feet?"

[1]The ocean. [2]A form of Durgā, Divine Mother, worshipped at Kāśī (Vāraṇasī). [3]God of wealth. [4]Creator of the world. [5]Preserver of the world.

[62]

O Mother! how shall I call Thee?
Sometimes Thou sittest on Śiva's left[1] and sometimes Thou standest on Śiva's chest[2].
Sometimes Thou art in cosmic form, and sometimes Thou art a nude Woman[3];
Sometimes Thou art Kṛṣṇ's sweet-heart[4], and sometimes Thou art Kṛṣṇa fallen at Rādhā's feet;
Sometimes Thou art Mother of the universe dwelling in the five elements.[5]

Sometimes Thou art Kulakuṇḍalinī[6] on the four-petalled lotus[7].
Prasāda says, "I shall listen to none ; the name 'Mother'[8] is peerless.
Therefore, Mother, I call Thee 'Mother' to get Thy secure feet".

[1]Śiva's wife, Durgā. [2]Kālī or Tārā. [3]Kāli. [4]Rādhā. [5]Supreme Self (Paramātman). [6]Serpent Power, Divine Mother, Divine Power, coiled and dormant. [7]Mūlādhāra at the base of Suṣumnā, a lotus with four yellow petals, the lowest chakra or centre of mystical consciousness. [8]Worship of God as Mother is the best. She is ever ready to give solace and comfort to Her child crying for Her help.

[63]

Where shall I go so late ?
I have wandered here and there.
The day has declined ; my heart trembles at this.
O Mother of the world ! be the refuge of the homeless, and give me protection.
I have heard from my Master[1]—Thou art the giver of four goods[2].
Rāma Prasāda says, "Keep me at Thy feet—grant me this prayer"

[1]Śrīnātha. [2]Wealth, happiness, virtue and liberation.

[64]

O friend ! this world[1] is an appearance which cheats[2] us. Let us plunder the treasure of joy[3].
Oh ! it is full of five elements : earth, water, fire, air and ether arranged beautifully.
At first, prakṛti[4] is gross ; then it becomes millions of modifications by different combinations ;
As the images of the sun in water in earthen vessels are different ; but when they are destroyed, the sun remains one[5].

When I was in the womb, I was a yogin ; when I was born,
I ate earth.

Oh ! the bond with my mother was cut by a midwife. But
how shall I cut the bond of Māyā ?

A woman's speech appears to be full of nectar ; but it is
not really nectarine but a cup of poison.

I drank it willingly to my heart's content ; but now I writhe
in the pain of poison.

Rāma Prasāda says in joy, "O Divine Śakti of Divine Father !
Do whatever Thou willest, O Mother ! Thou art the daughter
of a mountain[6]".

[1]Of birth and death. [2]Veils the Reality. [3]Divine bliss in the heart of the world. [4]Subtle prakṛti, a manifestation of Divine Śakti, becomes gross. [5]Divine Śakti is one, though its manifestations are many. [6]Dakṣa, King of Himālaya.

[65]

I shall go to Gaṅgā[1] no more
Coming to be related to Her Cowife's[2] son.

Fire[3] burns on Father's[4] forehead ; He carries Gaṅgā[5] on the
head day and night.

Mother[6] tends Her children, and on Her breast She sits in
anger.

How much shall I disclose stepmother's character ?

Kaikeyī exiled Rāma with matted hair clad in bark, and
bears witness to a stepmother's character.

Rāma Prasāda says, "This is the desire of my heart,
If I get the three[7] in one place, I shall not go to Benaras."

[1]At Kāśī. [2]Durgā, [3]Third occult eye. [4]Śiva. [5]Śiva hides Her in His matted hair. [6]Durgā. [7]Śiva, Durgā and Gaṅgā. The Gaṅgā flows near Hālisahar, the poet's birth place.

[66]

O mind ! wilt thou go to Jagannātha[1]
Thou wilt eat rich food in His market[2] bearing devotion on thy head.
Jagannātha[3] delights in the Self, and abides in the heart-lotus.
Thy desires will be fulfilled, if thou worship Him in thy heart.
There is a priceless gem[4] in thy abode, but thou art in quest of glass[5] under delusion.
Oh ! wherefore dost thou wander in vain ? Delusion shadows thee at every step.
Listen to thy Master's advice ; be in quest of thy Self.
Acquire true knowledge[6], and act always on its advice.
Prasāda says, "Where shall I go ? How can a headless person have a headache[7] ?
Oh ! it is like a night-blind person's saying—'one wanders like the wind !' "

[1]Puri where Jagannātha is worshipped. [2]Where rice, pulse, curry, etc., offered to Jagannātha are sold by the priests. [3]Lord of the world. [4]Divine Bliss. [5]Pilgrimage. [6]Of Brahman. [7]The Self is omnipresent, and cannot go to any place.

[67]

Oh ! thy mind should be after thy heart.
There are hundreds of yogis who wear matted hair and paint marks on their foreheads like sages.
Their actions are contrary to their instructions ; they wear long hair like a banyan tree with hanging roots.
O fools ! listen ; if one gets Śiva by worshipping a stone,
Then let me worship hills ceaselessly day and night !
If thou say : one gets the feet of the Deity by closing one's eyes,
Then why do not the blind get their cherished objects ?
Prasāda says, "Tell Mother to give thee a mind after thy heart.
By practising meditation with such a mind thou wilt get siddhi[1] ; all passions will be under thy control".

[1]Success, God-realization.

[68]

I desire to live no more, O Mother Tārā!
I am finished in life and wealth, uttering 'Tārā', 'Tārā', 'Tārā'.
Thou art mother and nurse of the world; thou bearest heaven, earth and hell in Thy belly.
O Mother! am I Thy god-son, self-born, free, cripple?
If Thou think me to be guilty, Thou art the root of all virtues and vices.
I am a mere instrument bound by the fetters of Māyā on all sides.
Thy name destroys fear of death—this is Śiva's saying inscribed in the books.
Now Thou becomest fierce, forgetting Śiva's saying under the influence of time.
Prasāda says, "Thy play, O Mother, is inscrutable to all.
Creation and destruction are Thy nature; only Thou hast made me dead in life!"

[69]

What more, O Mother, hast Thou in mind?
My journey[1] hath borne no fruit.
My house is gone, Mother, despite my being Thy[2] son. With whom shall I take refuge?
The house was ramshackle, O Mother, and yet beautiful.
That hath become a haunt of ghosts, surrounded by jungles terrific.
Wretched damp hath made the walls decripit.
Six white ants[3] are constantly cutting the bonds of my thatched roof.
Prasāda says, "O Mother Tārā! tell me what will do me good.
If I have to build my hut anew, my life will come to an end".

[1]To this world. [2]Deliverer. [3]Passions.

[70]

O Death ! with what motive
Hast thou come well-dressed ? Art thou not ashamed ?
I have baffled all thy hopes by wearing an amulet of Kālī's name.
If thou have come with hopes, thou shalt return empty-handed.
Six passions are there, who oppress me ; I hand them over to thee ; take them away.
Wherefore dost thou use thy force on me ? My house[1] is not under thy jurisdiction[2].
I have got a direct lease of it in the name of 'Kālī' with a deed.
Prasāda says, "Why dost thou not depart ? Art thou not afraid ?
She is my Mother Kālī with a necklace of heads[3] ; She will take thy head as a sacrifice this very day !"

[1]Body. [2]A devotee of Divine Mother is beyond death. [3]She is the Ruler of good and evil, life and death.

[71]

O Divine Mother ! have I not yet become to Thy liking ?
What more suffering wilt Thou inflict on Thy unworthy son ?
Thou gavest me the gem of knowledge[1] which Thou tookest back as rent.
O Mother ! calculate and see what more suffering is in store for me !
Thou broughtst me to the world by deceit, and fedst me on poison of enjoyment[2].
I am always burning with poison", says Prasāda, "how long shall I call Thee ?"

[1]Knowledge of Reality or Brahman. [2]Sentient pleasure is an obstacle to release, and yields pain.

[72]

O mind ! why dost thou brood so anxiously like a motherless boy ?
Born in the world, wherefore dost thou brood in fear of death ?
Oh ! Śiva, destroyer of Death, lies under Mother's feet !
A serpent dreads a frog—this is very strange !
Oh ! why dost thou fear death, being a son of Divine Mother[1] ?
Hast thou become extremely bewildered like a lunatic ?
O mind ! whom is he afraid of, whose mother is Divine Mother ?
Why dost thou brood in vain ? Mutter 'Durgā' incessantly.
Thou shalt be fearless when thou wilt be awake[2].
Twice-born Rāma Prasāda says, "Make my mind pure.
O mind ! mutter the mantra given by Master[3]. What can Death do to thee ?

[1]An eternal spirit. [2]From nescience and delusion. [3]Guru.

[73]

O mind ! ponder on this.
Oh ! to-day, in a year, or in a century, thou must die.
Busy in the pursuit of earthly pleasures, O mind, thou didst not meditate on Durgā in life.
Always meditate on Durgā's blessed feet, if thou want to cross the sea of birth and death.

[74]

O mind ! canst thou not correct thy error !
Thou didst lose the root[1] by mistake, and yet thou art in quest of it !
Of brothers, friends, wife and sons, who are thine own,
Whom dost thou love most ? Love Divine Mother[2] as much.
Atoms are eternal substances, which are combined into thy body.
When they are disjoined, it is destroyed. Who is thy own ? Ponder this.

Rāma Prasāda declaers : "Moving about everywhere
Divine Mother dwells in all creatures ; deem Her to be the
Supreme Reality".

[1]Divine Mother. [2]She can be attained by the deepest love. [3]"Thou shalt love thy Lord, thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and all thy strength, and with all thy mind. NT., St. Luke, 10, 27.

[75]

O Death ! here I am standing,
Making a boundary by the name of Kālī,
And meditating on Her blessed feet on Śiva's chest.
Can he be overwhelmed with the fear of Death who remembers
Mother's secure feet[1] ?

[1]Divine Mother's name is a strong armour against death.

[76]

O Kālī ! Thou hast broken the market through disregard.
With what shall I return home, O Mother ?
Whatever I had I have lost ; I roam about in vain.
Marketers of the market have left it one by one.
I am left behind with a load of sins on my head because of
my Karma[1].
The sun is about to set ; what shall I do in this broken
market ?
O Mother ! take Thy unlucky son on Thy lap ; give me the
boat[2] of Thy blessed feet.

[1]Wrong actions done in my past births. [2]To cross the sea of birth and death.

[77]

Blessed is Kāśī of Annapūrṇā[1]
Blessed is Śiva[2] ; blessed is Kāśī—thrice blessed, O blissful
Divine Mother !
Gaṅgā flows there like the crescent northward day and night.
Kāśī stands on Śiva's trident[3], encircled by Varuṇā and Asī[4].

If a a person dies there, he is merged in Śiva[5].
None starves there—such is the greatness of Annapūrṇa[6].
O Mother ! Rāma Prasāda starves and craves the dust of Thy blessed feet.

[1]A form of Durgā, giver of food. She is worshipped at Kāśī. [2]Śiva (Viśveśara) also is worshipped there. [3]Śiva's weapon. [4]Two rivers [5]The Śāktas and Śaivas believe in this. [6]A proverb runs so.

[78]

O mind ! meditate on Kālī, terrific of mien, in thy heart.
She resembles a blue cloud ; She is unclad and wears a mass of long loose hair.
O mind ! thou knowest not—She dwells in mūlādhāra[1] and sahasrāra[2].
She is always immersed in bliss as a goose[3] in the forest of lotuses[4].
Install the Goddess of bliss in thy heart joyfully.
Kindle the fire of knowledge and see Divine Mother's exquisite beauty.
Prasada says, "Thy devotee yearns for union with Thy form[5] ;
What is the good of merging[6] in Brahman ?"

[1]As dormant Divine Power. [2]As fully manifest, puissant Divine Being. [3]Divine Mother. [4]Six centres of mystical consciousness (chakra). [5]Communion. [6]Identity with the formless Brahman (Absolute).

[79]

O Mother ! what dost Thou see, sitting idle ?
If my lamp[1] is extinguished, Tārā looking on idifferent, my opponents will laugh[2] at me !
My lamp is being put out despite the presence of oil by six beetles[3].
Each of them has such qualities as bewilder me.
Prasāda says, "I am in light[4], O Mother ; I shall go home[5] with light ;

When I shall close my eyes,[6] I shall see Tārā who dispels all darkness".

[1]Lamp of knowledge of Reality. [2]Because I am Divine Mother's devotee. [3]Passions. [4]Of knowledge.
[5]Abode of Divine Mother.
"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar ;
Not in etire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home ;
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy."
—Wordsworth
[6]Die.

[80]

Why dost thou not meditate on Mother Kālī ? Why art thou anxious in vain ?

Oh ! the night of delusion[1] is over ; the day just dawns.

The morning sun rises and dispels dense darkness[2].

O Kālī ! thou hast made the lotuses[3] bloom at dawn.

Blind philosophers of the six systems throw dust into Veda's eyes[4].

Oh ! they know not jyeṣṭhā and mūlā[5] how can they break our play of worldly life ?

Where there is the mart of joy[6], neither Master[7] nor disciple is there.

Oh ! there actors and play both are creations of the Dramatist[8], thou wilt get the essence[9] in Reality.

A hero-devotee[10] who has tasted of that Bliss enters into that city[11].

Rāma Prasāda says, "My delusion is gone ; who can keep fire[12] tied in a bundle of cloth ? "

[1]Ignorance. [2]Delusion. [3]Chakras. [4]Misinterpret. [5]Stars.

[6]Divine bliss. [7]Guru. [8]God. [9]Of the self and its worldly life. [10]Devotee in divyāchāra path. [11]City of God. [12]True knowledge of Brahman.

[81]

Take care ! the boat is about to sink in the sea of the world ;
It is about to sink for ever.
The boat is weather-beaten ; the tempest is mighty ; unable
I am to row it in fright.
Six passions that reside in the body are committing treachery
this time.
O mind ! thou broughtest thy capital[1] from a Creditor[2] and
lost it all without utilizing it[3].
When thou wilt reckon with Him, O mind, thou shalt pay
a heavy fine.
Poor Rāma Prasāda says, "O mind ! the boat sinks in deep
water
Thou keepest another's account[4], but thefts[5] are committed
in thy own house ! "

[1]Talents. [2]God. [3]Talents are not cultivated. [4]The poet was a clerk in a Landlord's estate and kept accounts.
[5]God's capital is stolen by passions.

"And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve threwith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide."

—Milton.

[82]

How am I to blame ?
I find it hard to make both ends meet, O Mother ! so I
cry the whole day.
I resolve to renounce the world and leave this country.
But the orderly, Chintārām[1], comes and whirls the potter's
wheel[2].
I desire to leave home and mutter Thy name in solitude.
But Thou hast created such inescapable Māya[3] that I am

bound to it through chains of attachment.
Poor Rāma Prasāda says in mental agony at Kālī's feet,
"O Kālī! I am blackened by the stain of mind under the influence of Thy[4] objects of pleasure".

[1]Worldly thought. [2]Wheel of life. [3]World of delusion. [4]Created by Divine Mother.

[83]

My luck is never good.
If it is good, why does my mind move on a wrong path?
Now, O Durgā, my body has become a burthen to me.
I have not worshipped Thee with China rose, bael leaves and Gaṅga-water.
Nor have I been to Gayā and Kāśi, being born in this world,
When Death will come and forcibly seize me, I shall cry out 'Kālī', 'Kālī'.
Twice-born Rāma Prasāda says, "I float on water as a straw.
I cry out 'save me, save me', who will carry me to the shore?"

[84]

Thou hast given away all Thy blessed[1] feet, and not kept a little for Thy son[2]!
Thou wast generous, O Mother, like Thy generous father[3], and learnt generosity from Thy Mother[4].
Thou art as generous[5] to me as Thy parents[6] were!
He is under Thy feet, O Mother, who is the Custodian of Thy treasure[7].
Śiva is always intoxicated with hemp leaves, and satisfied with bael leaves only.
Thou hast given me, O Mother, untold sufferings in a round of births.

Prasāda says, "I shall call Thee all-destroying[8] when I shall die this time."

[1]Secure. [2]The poet. [3]Dakṣa. [4]Menakā. [5]Ungenerous. [6]They caused Durgā's death. [7]Feet. [8]Ruinous.

[85]

O Kālī I shall call Thee no more.
Being a Woman Thou borest a sword, and being unclad Thou faughtest a battle[1]!
Thou didst give me an occupation which Thou tookest away[2].
Thou hadst a stupid son whose head Thou didst muddle.
Poor Rāma Prasāda says, "O Mother! what hast Thou done this time?
Loading a worn-out boat with freight, Thou hast sunk it and ruined my capital with profit!"

[1]Kālī killed the demons, Śumbha and Niśumbha in a battle with a host of demons. [2]The poet got a clerk's post and lost it.

[86]

Thou hast got an inauspicious but comfortable bed in this world; the sleep thou hast courted doth not end.
Hast thou known—the night of thy pleasure will never be over?
Thou embracest thy wife[1] desire; wherefore dost thou not leave her and turn thy back[2] on her?
Thou hast covered thy body all over with a sheet of hope[3]; wherefore dost thou not uncover it?
Thou coverest thyself in winter and summer equally with it. Wherefore dost thou not get it washed[4] by a washerman?
Thou hast drunk the wine of pleasure; doth not thy intoxication cease?
Thou art drunken day and night, and dost not utter 'Kālī' even by mistake.

O Prasāda ! thou art very stupid ; thy desire for sleep[5] is never fulfilled.

Eternal sleep[6] will overtake thee in sleep ; thou wilt never be awakened from sleep.

[1]Dear. [2]Discard. [3]Hope is insatiable. [4]Destroy all hopes with knowledge and purify the mind. [5]Sensuous pleasure. [6]Death.

[87]

I am a direct tenant[1] of benign Kālī in Her estate.

That beneficent Goddess is my sovereign.

O Death ! thou knowest me not ; if thou know me, thou wilt be terrified.

I live in Mother Kālī's court and carry the load of Her blessed feet[2].

I am Her direct tenant ; Her estate is not scourged by drought or flood[2].

Look at the sandy bed of a river, which keeps the estate fresh when it is full.

Prasāda says, "O Death ! thou bearest the load of a ghost.

Oh ! thou knowest not the secret of the feet of Her Majesty[4], which hath granted thee thy office".

[1]Devotee of Divine Mother always in Her presence and under Her direct guidance. [2]Her intimate devotee. [3]Kingdom on God is eternal. [4]Divine Mother.

[88]

Tārā-boat hath cast its anchor at the landing place.

O mind ! come running if thou want to get across.

Set sail by the name of Tārā[1] and row the boat quickly.

If thou want to cross the sea of suffering, disentangle the knots[2] of thy mind.

Do shopping in the mart. Wherefore dost thou wander about in vain ?

The day of earthly life is over ; the eve has set in. What more wilt thou do in the world-mart ?

Rāma Prasāda says, "Take courage ? gird up thy loins.
Oh ! I am running away this time, breaking the fetters
of attachment to the world[3]".

[1]Divine Mother's name can destroy ignorance of our real nature as an eternal spirit and consequent birth and death. [2]Love and hate. [3]To be born no more.

[89]

O Tārā ! thou savest the world ; but thou hast kept me
in ignorance. Am I not of the world ?
At the end of the day I swim at night, uttering 'Durgā'.
My boat is weather-beaten ; Mother is its helmsman ; yet
my loaded boat is about to sink.
Poor Rāma Prasāda is overhelmed with grief ; being Mother,
Thou hast sent me to my aunts' house !
Where didst Thou go and learn this virtue ?
O Tārā ! being Mother, Thou turnest Thy son adrift[3] !

[1]Old age. [2]Avidyā, ignorance, false conceit of 'I' and 'mine' in the mind-body-complex, wife, children, house, property, etc. [3]Lead him astray.

[90]

Thou art of the essence of thought, O Tārā, hast Thou thought
of me ?
In name, Thou art destroyer of the world's anxiety ; but in
reality, do I find Thee so, Mother ?
At morn Thou givest me thought of money ; at noon, thought
of food ;
At eve, idle thought ; tell me, Mother, when I find time to
call Thee.
Thou hast given me thought of Māyā, O Mother, whereof
I always think ;
I am unable to know Thee, Mother, albeit I be immensed in
the well of thought.

O Mother! Thou, daughter of a mountain[2], on getting the best wish-giving gem,[3]
Hast turned into a stone, cheating Rāma Prasāda of it.

[1]Cosmic nescience which produces all objects of experience and pleasure. [2]Dakṣa, king of the mountain Himālaya. [3]Secret of God-realization.

[91]

I shall mutter 'Kālī', 'Kālī', and depart with a beat of drum.
Oh! I do not drink liquor[1] but I drink nectar[2] in joy.
My mind is intoxicated with the Divine to-day; but drunkards call me a drunkard!
If thou merely drink liquor, people will call thee a drunkard.
O mother! there is a sādhana; who knows its secret? Only that God-intoxiacated devotee[3] knows it.
If thou imitate another's sādhana[4] thou wilt aggravate disease of body.
Prasāda says, "Without a Master[5] thou wilt suffer[6] in vain".

[1]A small quantity of liquor is prescribed in the middle stage (vīrāchāra) for concentration of mind on Divine Mother and awakening dormant Divine Power (Kuṇḍalinī) in mūlādhāra when a sādhaka (seeker) has acquired mastery over his senses. In the lowest stage (paśvāchāra) drinking liquor is not allowed when the senses are not yet controlled. In the highest stage (divyāchāra) also drinking liquor is forbidden. The nectar of Divine bliss is experienced; or nectar dropping from Somachakra is tasted, and makes a sādhaka God-intoxicated. [3]A sādhaka who is an adept in Tāntric Yoga in the highest stage knows its secret. Concentration of mind on Divine Mother at the seven chakras, centres of mystical consciousness, with complete self-surrender, faith, devotion, and self-dedication is the essence of sādhanā at this stage. Complete self-mastery—not self-indulgence—is the indispensable prerequisite for Tāntric Yoga. [4]Śādhanā of another cult in which a sādhaka is not initiated, e.g., the Vaiṣnava sādhanā which forbids drinking of liquor completely and emphasizes faith, devotion, muttering and chanting a Divine name and dispenses with knowledge, works and yoga. The cult of Divine Mother seeks to harmonize devotion, works, knowledge and yoga with one another and transform earthly life into divine life [5]Guru, spiritual guide, an adept. [6]Tāntric sādhanā, especially in vīrāchāra is dangerous without proper guidance of an adept.

[92]

O Mother ! how long wilt Thou turn me round like an oil-man's blindfolded bullock[1] ?

Thou hast tied me to the tree of life[2] and turn me round it unceasingly.

For what fault of mine hast Thou made me obedient to six oilmen[3] ?

The word 'mother' is a mine of love ; when a son cries, she takes him in her arms.

This is the universal law, O Mother ! am I not a part of the world[4] ?

Countless sinners have been saved by muttering, 'Durgā', 'Durgā', 'Durgā'.

Remove my blinkers[5], O Mother ? let me see Thy blessed feet to my heart's content.

Bad sons are countless, Mother, but a mother is never bad.

Rāma Prasāda cherishes this fond hope, O Mother, that he lie at Thy feet at the end[6].

[1]He walks round a wooden oil-mill and works it. [2]The world of birth and death. [3]Passions. [4]Exception. Mother Kālī is cruel to Her son, Rāma Prasāda. [5]Delusion, ignorance, egoism, the sense of 'I' and 'mine'. [6]After death.

[93]

This time have I meditated on the essence, and learnt meditation from one in trance.

Learning it from one, Mother, I have made all things as one[1].

I have kept my pure mind on auspicious Mother at the top of three nerves[2].

Now giving Thy office to Thee have I surrended me to Thee[3].

Coming to the world-market this time, have I done my selling and buying.

My credit is nil, and debit is all[4].

Merging my life[5] in Thy feet[6], and blending my tune with Thy anklets' sound[7],

Have I learnt a song of that land.

What name is sung in the tune, O Mother ! I have recognized Thee as Master[8] at a glance.

Prasāda says, "I have surrendered this time both my virtue and vice[9] to Thee.

I have given up all works and religious rites[10], knowing Kālī's name[11] as Brahman.

[1]In indeterminate trance (nirvikalpa samādhi) all difference is merged in identity. [2]Sahasrāra where Iḍā, Piṅgalā and Suṣumnā end. [3]There is no difference between a soul and God in this trance—there is only Identity Consciousness. [4]Nothing is left as 'mine' ; all is surrendered to 'Thee'. [5]Life, mind and soul. [6]The Absolute. [7]Completely surrendering my will to the Divine Will. [8]Most proficient in divine music. [9]Both virtue and vice should be surrendered to Divine Mother in order to receive Her grace and realize Her. Complete surrender of our being—physical, vital and mental—to Her is necessary for its complete transformation into life divine due io Her grace. [10]Religious rites are given up at an advanced stage of sādhana as unnecessary. [11]Divine name (nāma)=Brahman (nāmin). Both Śāktaism and Vaiṣṇavism believe in this doctrine. "God's essence, form, and name are one and the same—made of pure consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda)." (Chaitanyacharitāmrta, ii, ch. 17.) Hence continued muttering, chanting and remembering a Divine name reveals the nature of the Divine Being. It is not a sensible or comprehensible symbol. It is beyond the grasp of the senses, manas and buddhi. Its spiritual essence is revealed by Its grace or Ged's grace.

[94]

O Kālī ! I will eat Thee[1] up this time ;

(O Tārā, compassionate to the poor !) I was born in gaṇḍayoga[2].

If a son is born in this yoga[3], his mother dies.

This time either Thou shalt eat me or I will eat Thee[4] ; either of the two I must accomplish.

I will make a curry a of Thy two maids—Dākinī and Yoginī[5].

I will make a sauce of Thy necklace of demons' heads[6].

I will smirch my hands and feet and whole body, Mother, with thy dark complexion[7].

When Death will overtake and fasten me, will I darken his face with that dark tint.

I threaten to eat Thee, Mother, but I will not swallow Thee up[8].
I shall set Thee on my heart-lotus and worship Thee mentally.
If Thou say, Death will trouble me if I eat Kālī,—
I need not fear ; I shall throw dust into his eyes by uttering 'Kalī'.
I will let him know well—Rāma Prasāda is Kālī's son—
"Do or die" will be my motto in compassing my end.

[1]'I'=sādhaka, aspirant. 'Thou'=God, Divine Mother. I shall eat Thee =I shall merge 'Thee' in 'I'=I am Brahman or God. [2]An arrangement of planets at the time of a son's birth causes his mother's death. It really means auspicious moment here. [3]See 2. [4]Either 'Thou' wilt be 'I' or 'I' will be 'Thou'. Difference between 'Thou' and 'I' will be annulled, and Identity will be established. [5]Hobgoblins. [6]I will kill all demoniac vices and dispositions. [7]My body and soul will be saturated with Divine Mother. [8]A devotee of Divine Mother does not want to be merged in Her and lose his Identity. He wants communion with Her.

[95]

O Tāra ! my luck is not good.
It is not good, Mother, at any time.
I lost my father, O Mother ! when I was a child ; my property was usurped by others.
I am of scant intellect ; Thou didst float me on the waters of a sea.
I float about, O Mother, like a moss in a current.
All cry out "Catch him", "Catch him", but none ventures into the fathomless deep.
O Mother ! wild flowers, bael leaves, my head,
Red sandal paste, and red China rose[1] I shall lay at Mother's feet.
O Divine Mother ! listen to Rāma Prāsada's prayer.
"Drag me to the Gaṅgā and throw me into its water on my death"[2].

[1]Kālī is fond of these red articles which are offered to Her. Offering one's head means complete self-dedication to Divine Mother. [2]Devoted Hindus want to die in the Gaṅgā.

[96]

Therefore I say, "Oh mind! keep awake; Death lies in ambush behind thee.
Hold the sword of Kālī's name, and the shield of Tārā's name.
Oh! what power hath Death to bear hard upon thee?
An orchestra is being played in Kālī's name with great tumult.
Oh! utter 'Durgā' incessantly till the night dawns.
If Kālī saves thee not, thy stain is indelible[1].
Many a great sinner has been saved; is Rāma Prasāda a worse sinner"?

[1]Or "the Iron Age is at its highest." This is another reading.

[97]

This is a great fun of Māyā[1]!
Those who are bound by Māyā run about; the unbound enjoy happiness freely.
This is 'I'; this is 'mine'[2]—he who thinks thus is a fool!
O mind! thou thinkest false shows to be real and pluckest up courage[3].
Who am 'I'? what is 'mine'? who else is there save 'I'[4]?
O mind! who serves whom? Thy distinction between joy and sorrow is false.
Kindling a lamp in a dark room, if one lays hand on a treasure,
O mind! one grabs it entirely, leaving no trace, and puts out the light[5].
O wise man! thou livest in a mansion; look into thyself.
Rāma Prasāda says, "Lift up the curtain[6] and look into thine own face[7]".

[1]Cosmic nescience or ignorance produced by it. [2]Egoism is a delusion produced by nescicnce. [3]You run after pleasures of the senses by taking false appearances to be real. [4]'I' and 'mine' are false; the Self (ātman) alone is real; it becomes egoism (ahaṁkāra) when it is limited by avidyā. [5]So you should kindle the lamp of knowledge, know your Self (ātman) which is infinite bliss. [6]Nescience and delusion. [7]Real spiritual nature.

[98]

O mind ! thou hast lost the root of work.
Thou art pondering day and night where thou wilt get a purse of silver coins.
Coins are a mere fraud ; Mother Kālī is a treasure of gold.
Thou soldest gold for the price of glass ; fie ! fie ! O mind ! thou art unlucky.
Who will get more than he is destined by his Karma[1] ?
Thou wanderest about in vain from place to place ; the ordinance of destiny is irreversible.
Time[2] dwells in thy heart and grows like the shoot of a timber tree.
Oh ! destroy that Time ; mutter mantra[3] purified by breath-control[4].
Prasāda says, "What dost thou ponder, O mind ! thou art a horse[5] ridden by five riders[6].
They are discordant, and will disturb thy peace".

[1]Destiny or actions done in previous births. [2]Death. [3]Mystic formula. [4]Prāṇāyāma. [5]Mind is controlled by the sense-organs, though it is their master. [6]Sense-organs. Sense-control is the root of spiritual discipline.

[99]

O mind ! what calamity will befall thee—thou knowest not—
When the last upsurging breath will block thy throat.
I tell thee the means of escape when yet there is time.
Oh ! be firm in meditating on Mother Kālī's blessed feet.
Thou hast kept a pet bird[1] in a cage ; who will confine it ?
Oh ! thou knowest not—it has nine doors[2].
Thou hast bad companious—six big ones[3].
Thou dost whatever they command thee—such is the devilish courage of thy heart !

Prasāda says, "Thou knowest the truth at heart.
Shall I wash the dirty linen in public[4] and explain ?

[1]The soul (jīvātman). [2]The body has nine apertures, e.g., two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, generating organ, and excretory organ. [3]Passions.—lust, anger, etc. [4]Disclose your misdeeds.

[100]

Such is Mother's judgment !
That calamity betides one who mutters 'Durgā' day and night.
I have submitted petition[1] to Thee, Mother, and await Thy orders with folded palms.
When will there be hearing, Mother, at Thy court, and how shall I be saved from this crisis ?
How shall I answer questions[2], Mother, at cross-examination ? My brain is lacking in intelligence.
O Mother ! I depend upon Śiva's words[3] only, which accord with Vedas and Tantras.
Prasāda says, "Mother ! I desire to flee in fear of Death[4].
Let me die on the bank of the Gaṅgā, uttering 'Durgā' at the last moment".

[1]Against Death. [2]About my good and bad deeds. [3]Tāntric sādhana. [4]Conquer death and be immortal.

[101]

O blissful Mother ! my luck is bad, indeed !
Being engrossed in earthly pleasures I could not go to Kāśī[1].
Else, my Mother Annapūrṇā[2] being there, why should I starve[3] ?
I am in dread of starvation, although I sowed various seeds in my tilled land,
Which is swamped by flood ; I till my land in vain.
No virtuous actions did I perform, but heaps of sins I committed.

I blocked my path of release, and am stranded in a blind alley.
O Mother ! being born in India[4], my fatherland, what have I done ?
Both my present life and future life are undone[5] ; I float on a shoreless sea[6].
Rāma Prasāda says, "I can't brood day and night.
O Mother ! when Death will show his might, I shall strangle him by Durgā's name[7]".

[1]A holy place. [2]Annapūrṇā (giver of food) is a name of Durgā. She is worshipped in a temple there. There is a proverb : none dies of starvation at Kāśi ; Annapūrṇā feeds all there. [4]Holy land. [5]Both happiness and salvation are lost. [6]Of birth and death. [7]Divine name is the way to life eternal.

[102]

O Death ! why dost thou threaten me in vain ?
He[1], who hath given thee thy office, hath assured me of release[2].
How much hath thy dignity increased by getting a deed of lease ?
Oh ! who did ever burn a kuśa effigy[3] when the person is present ?
If I owe any arrears I will not pay them to thee.
Who takes refuge with a watchman, when King himself is present ?
I live in Śiva's kingdom[4] ; He hath given me a deed of lease.
Rāma Prasāda says, "Divine Mother[5] is a witness to this".

[1]Śiva. [2]From death, immorlality. [3]An effigy of kuśa grass of an ascetic is burnt after twelve years because his whereabouts are not known. [4]Kingdom of God. [5]Kālī.

[103]

O Death ! I am not thy victim ; wherefore dost thou persecute me in vain ?

Know it for certain, O Death ! —I am a servant of Durgā ; I owe thee nothing.

Divine Mother is my sovereign ; I live under Her direct rule ; I owe thee nothing.

O King[1] ! all rents have I paid ; I have not to go to thy court.

Go to Chitragupta[2] and enquire who are defaulters.

I am a resident of Durgā's estate, where rents are not high,

And no persecution of a rent-collector. Rāma Prasāda says, "O son of Sun-God[3] ! Never come here.

If Mother hears that thou didst come here, there will be no end to thy humiliation[4]".

[1]King of death. [2]Accountant of Death, who records all persons' good and bad actions. [3]Death. [4]Punishment.

[104]

Whom do I fear in this world, whose Queen is Divine Mother ?

I live happily in blissful Mother's estate as Her direct tenant.

There is neither settlement nor assessment of rent, Mother ! nor is the estate auctioned for arrears of rent.

Wherefore Śiva[1] hath become Her officer passes my comprehension.

There is no other trouble ; I have to pay no capital tax, O Mother !

I am firm in muttering Durgā's name, which I pay as rent.

Twice born[2] Rāma Prasāda cherishes a fond desire in his heart

That he buy Divine Mother's estate[3] for his ardent devotion.

[1]He is extermely compassionate and generous. [2]Rāma Prasāda was a Vaidya by caste. [3]Kingdom of God.

[105]

My coming to this world is a mere hope unfulfilled ;
As a black bee is charmed by a painted lotus[2].
O Mother ! Thou didst persuade me to eat *neem*[3] as sugar[4] by deceit,
Which I ate in greed of sugar, O Mother ! bitter taste clings to my tongue the whole day.
O Mother ! Thou broughtest me down to earth on the pretext that Thou wouldst play with me.
The play Thou hast played with me, Mother, hath not fulfilled my hope.
Rāma Prasāda says, "In this play in the world what was destined has happened,
Now take Thy little infant home at eve, and hold him in Thy arms".

[1]The poet compares himself to a black bee which is charmed by a false appearance. [2]He is charmed by false pleasures. [3]Bitter fruit. [4]Real joy. Sensual pleasure ends in misery.

[106]

Forget not Durgā's[1] name ; forget not ; forget not.
Śiva[2] was not killed by drinking poison that emerged from the churned ocean as He remembered Durgā.
If a calamity befall thee, do remember Durgā in distress.
King Suratha was not killed by countless thrusts of swords as he trusted himself to Tārā.
Bibhu, a prince, started on a voyage uttering Durgā's name,
Was drowned on return voyage in a sea ;
But yet he was not killed[3].

[1]She is a deliverer from dangers and disasters. [2]Even Śiva was saved from death by Durgā. This is eulogy.

[3]"For thou alone dost keep
Me safe where'er I lie ;
As in a rocky cell
Thou, Lord alone in safety makest me dwell".

—Milton.

[107]

O mind ! call 'Mother' no more ; where wilt thou get Her, friend ?

Had She been alive, She would have appeared before thee ; all-destroying Mother is not alive.

Let me go to stepmother[1], Gaṅgā's bank, burn Mother's effigy of Kuśa grass[2],

Offer rice-cakes to Her departed Spirit after mourning and go to Kāśi[3].

[1]Gaṅgā is a wife of Śiva, and a cowife of Durgā. So She is the poet's stepmother. [2]Ten days are the period of special mourning, and one year, of general mourning, after father or mother's death. [3]On the bank of the Gaṅgā. The poet is angry with Durgā because She does not respond to his repeated prayer.

"Answer me when I call,
God of my righteousness,
In straits and in distress.
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer".

—Milton

[108]

Mutter the name of Kālī or Tārā

Which shall dispel the fear of Death,

Which turned Śiva an ascetic, and made Him live on cremation grounds,

Whom Brahmā[1] and other gods failed to realise by meditation[2].

Śiva is nearly lost in meditation on Her name ; please say : He is completely immersed in it.

Yet try to awaken Him out of His trace (by uttering Her name).

Very stupid am I ; I have neither devotion nor power to chant hymns to Her.

Twice-born Rāma Prasāda bows and prays to Her : "Keep me at Thy blessed feet[3]".

[1]Creator. [2]Divine Mother is incomprehensible to even the gods through meditation. She is attainable through devotion only.
[3]"Lord, my God, to thee I fly;
Save me, and secure me under
Thy protection while I cry."
—Milton.

[109]

O Mother ! how many times shall I tell Thee the story of my sufferings ?
I float on the water of misery like a moss drifted by a current.
Twice-born Rāma Prasāda says, "Mother ! hast Thou become cruel ?
Wait, let me behold Thee in the temple of my heart for ever".

[110]

O mind ! on what business hast thou come ?
Oh ! thou knowest not the secret of trade ; so thou hast lost capital and profit.
Why didst thou not fill thy boat[1] with the gem[2] given by Master[3] and trade with it ?
Oh ! keeping evil company[4], thou didst drown thy boat.
Rāma Prasāda says, "Wherefore didst thou not bring the gem ?
Oh ! what profit[5] wilt thou make ? Thou hast lost the creditor's[6] capital ! "

[1]Body. [2]Divine name or mantra. [3]Spiritual guide. [4]Being misled by passions. [5]Spiritual advancement. [6]Guru.

[111]

This is why I am aggrieved—
Thou, my Mother being alive, theft is committed in my house[1] wherein I am awake !
I resolve to mutter Thy name, but I forget it at proper time.
I have understood, got the secret, and known Thy trick[2].
Thou didst give me naught ; and so thou didst get, take, or eat naught from me. Is this my fault ?
Hadst Thou given me aught, thou wouldst have got, taken, and eaten something from me, I would have given and fed Thee some of it.
Fame, disfame, good taste[3], bad taste[4] all are thine.
O Goddess of Bliss ! why dost Thou dance out of tune[5] whilest Thou art immersed in an ecstasy of bliss ?
Prasāda says, "Thou hast given me a mind with a twist[6] in its eye.
Thy creation shows Thy scorched[7] sight, which I mistake for sweets[8] and pursue in vain.

[1]Passions are misleading me and frustrating the purpose of my life. [2]Divine Mother hides Her face from Her child and binds him to worldly life of sense-pleasures through Māyā and avidyā. [3]Joy. [4]Sorrow. [5]Indulge in a play of Māyā. [6]Avidyā. [7]Cursed. [8]Joys.

[112]

O Mother Kālī ! Thou didst become a beautiful dancer[1] in a circle[2] of dancing milkmaids[3] at Vṛndāvana[4].
Thy mantras[5] are different ; various are Thy sports. Who comprehends this deep mystery ?
Accomplished Rādhā[6] is thy half body ; Thou art man and woman[7] both.
Thou wast unclad[8] ; now Thy robe is yellow[9] ; Thou hadst long loose hair ; now Thy hair is tied into a knot ; now Thou hast a flute in Thy hand.
Thy sidelong glances charmed Śiva before.
Now Thy dark body with beauteous lines and oggling eyes charm the young damsels of Vṛndāvana.

Thy laughter was loud and terrific to three worlds ; now it is
 mild and enchants the young milkmaids.
O Kālī ! Thou didst dance in a sea of blood[10], now Thou art
 fond of waters of Yumna.
Prasāda laughs, immersed in innate bliss, and says,
 "O Mother ! I have fathomed the mystery after deep
 reflection ;
Kṛṣṇa, Kālī and Śiva—all are one[12]—I have known,
 O Lady ! "

[1]Kṛṣṇa, God as Lover. [1]Circular dance. [3]Kṛṣṇa's essential powers of love, parts of His Power of love (Rādhā) (hlādinī śakti). [4]Eternal abode of Kṛṣṇa. [5]Mystic formulæ representing the Divine Being. [6]God's Power of Love. [7]Sexless, God and Divine Power. [8]As Kālī. [9]As Kṛṣṇa. [10]As Kālī, war-Goddess. [11]Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa's ab de, is situatedon the bank of the Yamunā [12]Kṛṣṇa, God as Lover, Kālī, Divine Power(Śākti), and Śiva, Absolute, Sachchidānanda, Existence—Consciousness—Bliss, are one. The Vaiṣṇavas worship Kṛśṇa ; the Śaivas worship Śiva ; the Śāktas worship Śakti, Kāli, Durgā, or Tārā, Divine Power or Mother. The poet's catholicity is expressed in this song. In Christianity 'Father', 'Son' and 'Holy Ghost' are one.

[113]

My time is wasted in fun and pleasure.
I have missed my work under the influence of Time[1].
When I earned money in different places,
My brother, friends, wife and children were obedient to me.
Now as I can't earn in my old age,
All of them are angry with me because I am poor.
When a minion of Death will sit near my head and catch me
 by the forelock,
They will dress me like an ascetic, lay me on a stretcher, give
 me an earther pitcher,
Take me to a cremation ground crying out 'Hari', Hari[2]' and
 then go home.
Rāma Prasāda is dead ; they will cease crying, and eat their
 meals happily.

[1]Destiny. [2]A name of God. The Hindu coffin bearers cry 'Hari' in Bengal.

[114]

O mind! what complaint shall I make against thee?
Thou canst utter abuses, but thou art unable to utter 'Durgā' and 'Śiva'.
Thou hast eaten various kinds of delicious fares;
Thou shalt suffer the consequence, when I shall breath my last.
How shall I live with five senses[1] that have contrary desires[2]?
But, Oh! if they commit thefts[3], I shall get severe punishment[4].

[1]Eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and skin. [2]They lead me in different directions to fulfil their opposite desires. [3]Sins. [4]Vice is punished, and virtuous life is the foundation of spiritual life.

[115]

O my forgetful mind! thou knowest not how to keep accounts[1].
When thou wast born, thou wast credited[2], and began to be debited[3].
Oh! enter receipts and expenses aright; if they are equal, there is no cash balance.
If receipts are greater than expenses, thou art accountable for the balance.
If there is cash balance, there will be no end to thy writing to account for it.
Twice-born Rāma Prasāda says, "What is the use of writing credit[3] and debit[4]?
Oh! meditate on Kālī, Tārā, Durgā in the mind."[5]

[1]The poet was a landlord's accountant. [2]Birth is credit. [3]Life daily decreases. [3]Merits, good works. [4]Demerits. bad works. [5]It is real work which leads to the realization of God.

[116]

O mind! if thou take my medicine,
Take at times, jam of patal[1] given by Śrīnātha[2]
Renounce thy wealth and worship Śiva, conqueror of Death.

Rāma Prasāda says, "Then only, mind, thou shalt be free from the desease of rebirth[3]".

[1]A kind of vegetable ; mantra of Kālī. [2]The poet's spiritual guide. [3]Liberation, beatitude.

[117]

O mind ! thou art not under my control.
Leaving the pure honey[1] of the lotus[2]-petals, thou art mad in pursuit of pleasures of objects.
Thou dost not awaken Serpent Power[3] Divine Śakti[4] ;
Thou hast become lazy on seeing a pitcher of molasses[5].
Wherefore hast thou become so lazy ?
This body is a basket of various flowers ; thou art not a judge of real work.
Prasāda says, "Setting gems[6] aside, thou goaded by Karma[7] roamest about".

[1]Divine bliss. [2]Lotuses are centres of mystical consciousness in the suṣumnā. [3]Kulakuṇḍalinī, Divine Power coiled and dormant in mūlādhāra. [4]Dynamic Divine power. [5]Sense-pleasures. [6]Spiritual experiences. [7]Past deeds.

[118]

Shun, O mind, the serpent of evil company.
Dread not the furious elephant of Death.
Eschew transitory objects ; worship the eternal Being[1] incessantly.
Be absorbed in the taste of honey[2], O black bee of mind !
Pleasant is the kingdom in dream ; but how dost thou feel when thou awakest from slumber ?
Both blind persons fall into a well—one mounted on the other's shoulder.
Do actions leave an active person ?—what more shall I say ?
In this thine house six thieves[3] steal ;
But thou goest to another's house—this is a great fun !

Prasāda says, "This is poetry ! What[4] is born in thee,
Though devoid of limbs, burns thy limbs[5]."

[1]Divine Mother. [2]Divine bliss. [3]Passions. [4]Sex-love, lust, [5]Lust. anger and greed are the three gates of hell. *(Bhagavad Gita)*.

[119]

O Mother[1] ! my second Mother[2] unborn[3],
The only boat[4] in the endless sea of birth and death,
Persons blinded by ignorance, distinguish between Durgā and Śiva.
They are non-different Supreme Self in their essence.
She transcends Māyā[5], and is yet Herself Māyā ;She assumes a body for our prayer.
She is compassionate to the poor, and gives them boons more than desired.
One goes to the garden of bliss[6] by muttering Tārā's name.
If one mutters Her name, one becomes Śiva[7] after death.
Poor Prasāda says, "Those who are devoid of meritorious works,
Are saved by Saviour Mother from three worlds[8] through Her grace".

[1]Durgā, Divine Mhther. [8]Other than human mother. [3]Eternal. [4]To cross the sea of birth and death with. [5]Cosmic nescience which produces the phenomenal world. [6]Divine Mother's eternal abode of bliss. [7]The jīva becomes Śiva. [8]Heaven, earth and hell.

[120]

O Mother Tārā ! Consort of Śiva !
Thou hast passed a decree of suffering[1] on me—what Thy fine judgment !
How can I cotrol six guards[2] who watch me, one defendant ?
I desire to kill them by poisoning.
Krishna Chandra is their master, who will put my property to auction.
Thou hast made Kriṣhna Pānti a landlord, who earned his living by selling betels.

Where shall I get money to submit petition to Thy Majesty ?

Thou hast made me a beggar by fraud, and art sitting as a Princess.

The lawyer of Thy Majesty intensely desires to dismiss all suits[3].

He will cross-examine me in such a way that I may lose my suit.

I have no place to fly to ; tell me, Mother, what means I shall adopt.

Thy blessed feet I could resort to ; but Śiva has taken them already[4].

[1]Lifelong suffering. [2]Passions. [3]Prayer. [4]Kālī stands on Śiva.

[121]

O Śiva ! I shall settle with Thee this time, and take my Mother's feet by force.

I have detected Śiva's mistake—I shall tell everybody this time.

By what right does He hold my Mother's feet on His bosom, being my Father ?

Whenever I meet Him in a place, I shall tell Him this.

Stealing my Mother's feet, whom[1] does He threaten with death in vain ?

A child inherits his mother's property ; on what right has He usurped it ?

If Śiva desires His good, let Him give Her feet to me.

If Śiva's fault pains Her, Who may refuse them to me,

Rāma Prasāda says, "I fear not on the strength[2] of Mother's secure feet".

[1]The poet, a devotee of Divine Mother. [2]A devotee of Divine Mother is sure to get Her blessed feet which are his safe refuge for ever. A child inherits his Mother's property.

Cp. "The Lord hath heard my prayer,
My supplication with acceptance fair,
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping."
—Milton.

[122]

All are engaged in the controversy what happens after death.
Some say, "Thou wilt become a ghost" ; some say, "Thou wilt go to heaven" ;
Some say, "Thou wilt live near God" ; others say, "Thou wilt be united with God".
The Vedas say, "Thou art ether enclosed in a jar whose end is death[1]".
Oh ! virtue and vice are void[2] ; thou hast lost all by taking them to be real.
Five elements[3] live in harmony in this body ;
They will go to their own abodes on death[4].
Prasāda says, "Thou wilt be at the end what thou wast in the beginning[5] ;
As a bubble emerges out of water and merges in it".

[1]This is the Advaita doctrine. The finite self (jīva) is the Supreme Self, Ātman, or Brahman limited by ignorance (avidyā). When it is completely destroyed, the jiva becomes the Brahman. Avidyā is the cause of the body and mind. [2]Virtue and vice are created by mind and society, and as such relative ; they are ultimately the manifestation of the Brahman in the world of phenomena, although virtue is desirable and vice is undesirable.

Cp. "Shadow and sunlight are the same ;
And one to me are shame and fame"

Emerson.

[3]Earth, water, fire, air, and ether (ākāśa) are the ingredients of the body. [4]On death the body disintegrates into the elements. [5]Divine Mother. Śāktaism believes in liberation as identity with the Divine Being or eternal communion with the Divine Being.

[123]

O Mother Tārā ! destroy my mental agony which is unbearable.
The pangs of birth, O Mother, are forgotten after birth.
A new-born baby is bound by the delusion[1] of Māyā[2], and cries 'Mamma', 'Mamma'.

The pangs of birth and death, O Mother, are unknown to one unborn[3].
Hast Thou felt them ? Thou wast neigther born nor didst Thou die.
Rāma Prasāda says, "I shall quarrel with Mother ;
Yet I will lie at Her blessed feet[4], and no more undergo rebirth[5]".

[1]The sense of 'I' and 'mine', egoism. [2]Delution is produced by Māyā, cosmic nescience, a power of Divine Mother, which produces the world of phenomena. [3]Divine Mother. [4]I must abide with Divine Mother for ever. [5]The wheel of birth and death will cease.

Cp. "Happy, who in thy house reside,
Where thee they ever praise !
Happy whose strength in thee doth bide,
And in their hearts thy ways".

Milton (*Psalms*).

[124]

O mind ! cherish no hope for happiness[1], if thou desire to abide at Mother's secure feet.
Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Dharma, beaten in a game of dice had to leave his palace and court exile.
Śiva is Lord of gods and Judge of virtue and vice, and so lives in misery[2].
He is compassionate to the miserable, but stringent to those who hanker after happiness.
There is grief in joy, O mind, be not angry at this ;
There is pain in pleasure as there is pleasure in pain[3]—so the proverb goes.
O mind, thou thinkest, thou wilt fulfil thy hope by showing Mother false devotion[4] ;
She shall exact Her dues to the last furthing, and grant thee not the least concession[5].
O mind ! if thou art true, why dost thou act like a mean fellow ?

Oh! work hard earnestly, and thou shalt get an excellent gem[6].

[1]Desire for happiness never leads to beatitude. [2]He lives a destitute's life on cremation grounds, and begs for his living. [3]Pleasure and pain are inseparable. Desire is painful. Fulfilment of a desire yields pleasure which ceasing gives rise to another desire which is painful. [4]External formal worship may be attended with false devotion. Only desireless, undivided devotion pleases Divine Mother. [5]She is a stern task-master. [6]Divine Mother, beatitude. "Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart". (Psalm 37). "Salvation belongeth into the Lord". (Ibid, 4). "And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness". (Ibid, 9)

[125]

O Mother with dishevelled hair! release me from bondage[1].
I suffer day and night in this world.
Hast Thou forgotten me, O Queen[2], after handing me over to Death[3], O Mother?
Tārā! when wilt Thou cut my noose of cruel Death[4]?
Prasāda says, "What will be the good, if I go to Kāśī[5]?
Father[6] dwells on cremation grounds[7] holding my stepmother[8] on the head.

[1]Bondage to birth and death. [2]Sovereign of heaven, earth and hell. [3]Birth and death. [4]Make me immortal. [5]On the Gaṅgā. [6]Śiva. [7]The symbol of the destruction of all desires, and of purity and holiness. [8]Gaṅgā.

[126]

Why shall I go to Kāśī on the Gaṅgā? I shall chant Mother's name at home.
Why shall I leave my own[1] kingdom, and live in another's[2] kingdom?
I shall see hundreds of Gayā and Gaṅgā[3] at Kālī's feet.
Rāma Prasāda says, " I shall take refuge in Kālī's blessed feet;

I am not such a son of my Mother[4] that I shall call my
stepmother[5] Mother ! "

[1]Mother's. [2]Stepmother's. [3]Holy places. [4]Kālī. [5]Gaṅgā.

[127]

Oh ! why did I not pray to Tārā[1] ?
The boat of my body I have sunk in the ocean of saṁsāra[2].
I did bring this boat for trade to the stormy ocean.
Casting aside priceless treasure[3], I filled it with sins.
I did not behold the mighty waves[4] all around.
I did not bind Her feet[5] with my mind-string as a helmsman.
Prasāda says, " O Mother ! what have I done ?
The boat is drowned by a tempest, and I am done for[6].

[1]Divine Mother. [2]Cycle of birth and death. [3]Divine treasure. [4]Dangers. [5]Dedicate my body to Divine Mother and fix my mind on Her. [6]"The wages of sin is death".

[128]

O mind ! thy delusion[1] is not yet destroyed ;
Thou dost not behold Kālī's real form.
Oh ! heaven, earth and hell are Mother's forms[2] ; thou knowest[3] it, and yet seemest not to know[4] it.
Wherefore dost thou make and worship Her earthen Image[5] ?
Mother adorns the world with untold gold and gems.
Oh ! dost thou not feel ashamed to adorn Her with cork ornaments ?
Mother feeds all creatures with a variety of delicious fares.
Art thou not ashamed to offer Her sunned rice and soaked gram as food ?
Dost thou not know that Mother maintains the world with great care ?
Oh ! how dost thou want to sacrifice goats, sheep and buffaloes to Her ?
Prasāda says, "Only devotion is real prayer to Her ;

Thou wilt worship Her for show[6], but Mother will not accept
thy bribe[7]".

[1]False belief that the entire universe is not the manifestation of Divine Mother. [2]Manifestations. [3]Theoretically. [4]Intuit. [5]External symbol. [6]Pomp. [7]Formal, ritual worship without devotion. Cp. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth". New Testament, St. John, IV, 24. "God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him". I. John, IV, 16.

[129]

O mind! let us together try to steal Śiva's treasure[1], Mother's
feet, and bring them.
If we are caught in the act of stealing in a well-guarded house,
Our human body will be finished, and our soul will be bound
and taken to Kailāsa[2].
If we can follow Master's[3] advice firmly and enter His abode,
We shall pierce Śiva with the arrow of devotion[4] and snatch
His office[5] from Him.

[1]Divine Mother, Kālī, stands on Śiva's chest; Her feet are His cherished treasure. [2]Śiva's abode. [3]Spiritual guide. [4]Devotion is the sure means of attaining God. [5]Carrying Divine Mother's feet—God-realization. Devotion (bhakti) is the deepest love for God for His sake. "There is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,
Omnific. His most holy name is Love".
Coleridge.

[130]

O Kālī[1]! I ask Thee with humility why Thou hast given me a
load of misery.
I close my eyes and mutter 'Kālī', 'Kālī' day and night.
O Mother, compassionate to the poor, art Thou unkind to me
for this reason?
Listen, O Mother Kālī, do I call Thee stony-hearted for
nothing?

O Mother Tārā[2] ! Thou hast deprived me of Thy blessed feet and given them to Śiva.

Being mother, O Mother Tārā, Thou hast shown such kindness to a son !

Thou didst call Rāma Prasāda into being and make him born blind[3] !

[1]Divine Mother. [2]Deliverer from bondage to birth and death. [3]Ignorant of his spiritual nature and bound to embodied life.

"Ah ! if a Providence doth sway this all,
Why should best minds groan under most distress ? "

W. Drummond.

[131]

I have wasted my time under the influence of Time ; what will happen to me, Mother, at the end ?

Whom shall I call, Tārā, when Death will seize me by the hair ?

I have learnt from the Purāṇas that Thou art the purifier of sinners.

Now it is Thy duty, Tārā, to purify[1] me so that my foes laugh not at me.

Prasāda is aimless, unintelligent, ill-intentioned and incapable[1] ;

Only I live in the hope of getting Kālī's blessed feet which will make me fearless.

[1]Cp. "So, take and use Thy work !
Amend what flaws may lurk,
My times be in Thy hand !
Perfect the cup as planned ! "

R. Browning.

[132]

Let me see how Thou canst escape from me.

It is not like eating a plantain, Mother, from a child's hand by a fraud.

O Mother, I shall conceal Thee in such a secret place, that Thou canst never find Thy way out.

Thou canst throw dust into a child's eyes, Mother, if he is an idiot.

If Thou deliver me not from bondage, Mother, Śiva will be Thy father[1] !

[1]Instead of being Her husband. This is an abuse to Kālī, Divine Mother.

[133]

O Kālī ! how long shall I suffer like a bucket of a well ?

There is no end to my fall into the well of saṁsāra[1] and rise from it.

I have corns all over my body, being born in eight million species[2] ;

My neck is tied fast with the ropes of delusion[3] and egoism[4].

I have suffered in countless births[5] with no respite at times.

I shiver from cold, am drenched in rain, and scorched by the sun like a roasted egg-fruit[6].

I lie crippled and disabled in disease and death.

The wretched brazeir, my soul, repairs[7] me at once.

What sin have I committed, O Mother ? Wherefore dost Thou give me so severe punishment ?

Prasāda, says, "I lie prostrate at Thy feet and pray : Give me no more a fatal boil[8] operated by a quack".

[1]Cycle of birth and death. [2]After eight million births in different species, lower and higher, a soul assumes a human body. [3]Ignorance of one's nature as an eternal spirit. [4]False conceit of 'I' and 'mine' in the mind-body-complex due to avidyā. [5]Transmigration. [6]Suffer intensely due to ignorance and sins. [7]Is reborn. [8]Most intense suffering.

Cp. "Daughter of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best ! "

T. Gray : *Hymn to Adversity.*

[134]

Appoint me Thy cashier[1], O Mother Durgā, I am not ungrateful.

All plunder the treasure of Thy feet[2]—this I cannot bear.

The custodian of the treasure, Mother, is ever forgetful Śiva.

He is by nature generous and easily pleased ; still Thou keepest Thy treasure in His custody[3].

Half Thy body[4] is His estate ; yet His salary is handsome.

I am Thy servant without a pittance ; but I have a right only to bow to Thy feet.

If Thou behave like Thy father[5], Thou wilt forfeit my right to Thy feet.

If Thou behave like my Father[6], O Mother, I shall enjoy my legitimate right.

Prasāda says, "I am distressed with such a misfortuue as Thy feet ;

If I get such feet as Thine, I can drive all dangers away".

[1]The poet was an accountant of a landlord. [2]Beautitude. [3]Śiva carries Kālī's feet on His breast. [4]Kālī or Durgā is Śiva's wife ; a wife is said to be half body of a husband. [5]Dakṣa performed a sacrifice to which he did not invite Śiva. Being enraged at this, Durgā went to Dakṣa's house and burnt Herself to death on the sacrificial fire. [6]Śiva is easily pleased and ever rcady to give boons to His devotees.

[135]

O Mother Kālī ! get down and stand, dance no more, O mad Woman !

He[1] is not dead but alive, Mother ! He is the supreme Yogin[2] in the deepest trance.

Thy legs are so strong that His ribs would have broken, had He not muttered Thy name.

Old Śiva's bones are not strong ; He drank poison, and He was separated from Thee.

Why should He die to-day, Who did not die by drinking poison ?

Rāma Prasāda says, "He pretends[3] to die to get Thy blessed feet".

[1]Śiva or the Absolute. [2]The static Absolute meditates on the dynamic Divine Will (Mother) to manifest itself as the universe. Śāktaism regards Divine Mother as superior to the Absolute, while Śaivaism regards Śiva or the Absolute as superior to Divine Mother who creates the phenomenal world and empirtcal selves (jiva).

[136]

I am not an absconding criminal, O Mother ! Thou threatenest me in vain.
Extra rent I have not to pay, Mother, for a scrap land unassessed.
I keep an annual rent receipt sealed with a potent mantra.
I sit by Mother, paying all rents for my lands.
I will keep hold on Thee by the strength of Thy name[1] and force Thee to make them rent-free.
Prasāda says, "I am never a defaulter by a single shell.
If Thou drown me in the sea of misery, I shall merge in Thy feet and be their rightful owner".

[1]Cp. "Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,
Thee honour and adore,
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy name for evermore".

J. Milton : *Psalm.*

[137]

O Mother ! Thou art in my heart ; who says, "Thou art away from me" O Kālī !
Thou art a stony Goddess, inscrutable Māyā. O Mother ! Thou makest us assume so many rôles.
Thou assumest chief five forms[2] as methods of prayer differ.
How canst Thou escape from him who thinks the five forms as one ?
Thou dost hesitate to take charge of him who doth not trust himself to Thee[3].

Is he contented with glass, who knows the value of gold ?
Prasāda says, "My heart is pure lotus-form[4].
Be moulded to that form and dance as a mental Goddess".

[1]Cosmic nescience, the root of the world-appearance. [2]Śiva Śakti, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, and Sun-God. [3]Absolute self-surrender to God is necessary. [4]Blooming heart-lotus in which Divine power is awake.

[138]

O Mother ! who can understand Thy magic[1] ?
Thou art a mad Goddess ; Thou hast made all mad[2] with attachment.
Under the influence of Thy magic none can recognize any other[3] in this world.
All imitate others' actions—such is Kālī's wrath[4] !
Such is the agony caused by mad Goddess that none can know Her aright.
Rāma Prasāda says, "All sufferings vanish, if She grants Her grace[5]".

[1]Māyā which veils the true nature of everything. [2]In the pursuit of earthly pleasures. [3]All are Brahman in their essential nature. [4]She impels all to be moved by attachment to their dear ones in disregard of others, though all are equally Brahman. [5]Śāktaism believes in the grace of God like Vaiṣṇavism.

[139]

Make me mad, O Divine Mother !
There is no more use of knowledge[1] and discrimination[2].
Make me intoxcicated with the wine of Thy love.
O Mother ! enchanter of the devotees' hearts ! immerse me in the ocean of love.
In this Thy lunatic asylum, some laugh, some cry, and others dance in excess of joy.
Jesus[3], Moses[4] and Chaitanya[5] were, O Mother, unconscious in ecstasy of love.
Alas ! O Mother ! when shall I be blessed, mixing with them ?

In heaven there is a fair of lunatics ; there Master and disciple are alike.
Who can fathom the mystery of the play of love ?
Thou art mad with love, O Mother, crown of lunatics !
Make poor Prasāda rich, O Mother, in the treasure of love[7].

[1]Of the Reality. [2]Between the eternal and the non-eternal. [3]Christ, the founder of Christianity. [4]A prophet of Judaism. [5]Divine Incarnation according to Bengal Vaiṣṇavism. [6]Guru. [7]This poem shows the poet's catholicity. He recognizes the prophets of Judaism and Christianity. Śāktaism believes in Divine Mother as Love and in the deepest love for Her.

[140]

The hopes of my heart are not fulfilled ; the agony of my mind is pent up within.
I have spent my life in misery ; what more hope is there for happiness ?
O gracious Mother ! six enemies[1] are my companions that keep me from doing virtuous actions.
Rāma Prasāda says, "O Mother ! I ponder continuously but find no solution !
By taking refuge in Thy secure feet I have suffered so intensely ! "

[1]Passions.

(141)

Can there be compassion in the heart of one who is daughter of a mountain[1] ?
If She is not unkind, can She kick Her husband[2] in the chest ?
Thou art called 'compassionate' in the world ; but there is no trace of compassion in Thee, O Mother !
Thou wearest a necklace of heads[3] by cutting them off from others' sons.

The more I cry 'Mother', 'Mother', the more Thou turnest deaf ears to my cries.
Prasāda is used to suffering Thy kicks; yet he utters 'Durgā', 'Durgā'[4].

[1]Dakṣa, king of the Himalayas, Durgā's father. [2]Śiva. [3]Of demons. [4]Continues to pray in spite of misfortunes. cp. "Pray without ceasing". E. Paul, V, 17; "New Testament." God gives us misfortunes to chasten our spirit.

[142]

Listen to the story of my misery, O Mother Tārā! my home is not peaceful.
Those with whom I live play at cross purposes.
O Mother! five senses have five desires[1]; they are ever in quest of pleasure.
I was born in eight million species[2]; now I am born as a man.
I am a clown in this world whose essence is a burthen of misery[3].
It is difficult for me, O Mother, to live in this house[4].
Those who are masters of my house have ruined me; my mind is not in peace.
The owner of my house is of unstable mind, and pulls me in a tug of war.

[1]Contrary desires. [2]Law of Karma. [3]Threefold suffering. [4]Body.

[143]

O nude Kālī with dishevelled hair! fulfil the desire of my heart.
I don't get a trace of fulfilment of the desire, Mother, I cherish in my heart.
Tell me aright if Thou wilt grant me Thy grace.
I have told Thee, Mother, what desire I cherish in my heart.
O Mother! none knows this desire in three worlds[1] save Thee.

[1]Heaven, earth and hell.

[144]

How long shall I labour, Tārā, without wages? Tell me how long Thou wilt make me drudge.

I resolve on doing one thing, but I do another[1]; I never feel happy, O Mother!

Five elements[2] of my body goad me to move in different directions.

O Mother! it has become obedient to them aided by six passions.

Born in this world, I have suffered intensely.

O Mother! my mind is not fit to be happy, whose happiness makes all happy.

Thou didst feed me on the bitterest fruit[3] as sugar; my mind's bitterness doth not vanish.

O Rāma Prasāda! why dost thou grieve, taking refuge with Kālī?

[1]I resolve on praying to God, but I pursue pleasure of the senses. [2]Earth, water, fire, air and ether. [3]Nim. Sensuous pleasure is agreeable in the beginning but painful at the end.

[145]

So I take a pique against thee.

Thou hast saddled me, O Mother, with a family.

Everbody's family life is[3] fruitless without wealth.

O Mother! thou too hast quarreled with Śiva because He is a beggar.

Knowledge is the best sādhnā[1]; but charity is superior to religious rites.

O Mother! the Queen[2] of Vṛndāvana did not go to Mathurā[3] without a gift.

Thou playest the rôle of a poor woman, Mother, rubbing Thy body with ashes.

O Mother! where wilt Thou hide Thy wealth? Kuvera[4] is thy treasurer.

Why art Thou loath, Mother, to grant Thy grace to Rāma Prasāda ?

If thou keepest me at Thy feet, Mother, I shall abide there and remove all distress.

[1]Spiritual discipline. [2]Rādhā. [3]Where Kṛṣṇa was king. [4]God of wealth.

[146]

Tell me, O Mother Tārā, where I should stand.

I have none here, O Durgā, related to me.

Father loves a child whom mother loves—this is found everywhere.

Hope of love of the Father Who holds stepmother[2] on the head is in vain.

If thou show me not mercy, shall I go to my stepmother ?

If She takes me in Her arms, my heart's anguish will be soothed.

Rāma Prasāda says, "Mother ! it is inscribed in the Vedas.

That he who mutters Thy name is destined to get only a beggar's bowl and a torn rug[3] ".

[1]Śiva. [2]Gaṅgā. [3]Becomes indigent.

[147]

Is performing a mother's duty a child's play ?

By bringing forth a child one is not a mother, if she is indifferent to his suffering.

Mother has suffered for ten months and ten days.

But she asks not where he has gone when he is hungry.

When a child commits evil deeds, his parents mend him.

When Death is about to strike him with an iron rod, dost Thou not feel pain ?

Twice-born Rāma Prasāda says, "O Mother[1] ! where hast Thou learnt such behaviour ?

If Thou imitate Thy father's ways, bear not the name 'world-Mother' ".

[1]Durgā. [2]Dakṣa who caused the death of Durgā, his daughter, by not inviting Śiva to a sacrifice.

[148]

Go back, O Death[1] ! what do I care for Yama's[2] father ?
Yama is the judge of virtues and vices ; he rewards and punishes accordingly.
My virtue is absolutely nil ; take away my vices and put them to auction.
Śiva's feet are the destroyer of death, which I always enshrine in my heart.
Why should I fear ? I will go to Kailāsa[3] with a beat of drum.
Kālī is Rāma Prasāda's mother ; look ! She is dreadful in mien.
My Father is Śiva with a trident in hand ; Brahmā[4] and Viṣṇu[5] are His gatekeepers.

[1]Agent of Yama. [2]God of death. [3]Śiva's abode. [4]Creator of the world. [5]Preserver of the world.

[149]

This time I have meditated well ;
I have learnt meditation from an adept in meditation.
I have found a denizen of a country where there is no night.
I have neither morning nor evening[2] ; I have made evening barren[3].
I have shaken off sleep[4] ; I will not sleep again ; I have been awake in different ages.
I have given sleep this time to its creator[6], and lulled sleep into sleep.
I have painted gold with a mixture of alum and sulphur ;
I shall build a gold temple inlaid with gems—this desire I have cherished in my heart.
Prasāda says, "Devotion and salvation I have borne on my head.
Kālī's name is Brahman[7], this secret I have known and given up religious rites[8].

[1]Māyā, cosmic nescience. [2]Prayer. [3]Useless. [4]Avidyā, ignorance. [5]I pray at all times. [6]Divine Mother. [7]Divine name—God. [8]"Abandon all religious rites and take refuge in God" (Gītā, 18, 66).

[150]

O Kālī ! Thou hast brushed all difficulties aside.

Vedas and Tantras declare and Śiva confirms—wilt Thou not admit this ?

If Thou find a cremation ground, O Mother, Thou preferest it to a palace set with jewells.

O Mother ! Thou and thy Consort are alike ; He desists not from crushing hemp leaves[1].

He who is Thy devotee, Mother, has a different kind of lustre.

He is seldom clad in rags, rubs his body with ashes, and wears matted hair[2].

Thou brought'st me to earth and gavest me untold misery.

Yet I mutter Kālī's name—see how courageous I am !

People broadcast all around—'Rāma Prasāda is Kālī's son.

Who will understand the secret of Mother's treatment with Her son ?

[1]An intoxicating drug. [2]He bcomes extremely poor.

[151]

O mind ! hast thou resolved to go to a holy place ?

Thou wilt fall into a well and die—leaving the nectar of Kālī's lotus feet.

Birth is old age, sin and disease ; many kinds of bhoga[1] are there at Puri.

Oh ! Kāśī[2] is fatal in fever ; bath in the Gaṅgā at Triveṇī[3] will cure your disease.

Muttering Kālī's name with devotion is a potent medicine.

Oh ! drink it, be purged of sins ; thou wilt become a self-realized soul.

Oh ! what is impossible will become possible ; you will merge in the Supreme Soul.

Prasāda says, "O friend mind ! leaving the shade of the wish-giving tree[4],

Oh ! wilt thou escape from the fear of death by taking shelter
at the foot of a thorn-plant[5] ?

[1]There is a pun on the word which means delicious foods offered to Jagannātha (deity) or sufferings. [2]'Kāśī' means Banaras or cough. [3]A holy place or concentration of mind on the meetting place of Īḍā, Piṅgalā and Suṣumnā between the eye-brows. [4]Kālī. [5]Holy places. Pilgrimage is full of difficulties and discouraged. Worship and prayer at home is better.

[152]

With whose advice hast thou forgotten, O mind, my pet bird !
Thou livest in my heart, and yet thou deceivest me ?
I have encaged thee in my heart, O mind, to mutter Kālī's name.
Oh ! thou didst deceive me and delight in my enemy's[1] happiness.
Mutter the names 'Śiva', 'Durgā', 'Kālī' unceasingly, O mind !
Thy fevered body will be soothed ! mutter 'Kālī' once[2].

[1]Passions or sense-organs. [2]Unceasing prayer brings peace and tranquillity of mind.

[153]

Fie ! fie ! O black bee of mind ! thou art a foolish juggler.
Leaving the nectar of Kālī's lotus feet, thou hast become willing to drink the poison of worldly pleasures !
Thou art superior to the ten sense-organs[1], and called their king.
Thou always keepest bad company ; thou art king, indeed ! thy work is mean !
Thou art puffed up with pride and egoism, and struttest about like a chief justice.
Thou wilt learn when thou wilt be in trouble, and be trampled upon by Death !
Childhood, youth and old age disappear gradually.
Mind writhes in agony in a cell ; but he who prays is a true man and warrior.

Prasāda says in fun, "When thou wilt grow old, Death will come.
When he will deal a blow, what wilt thou do?

[1]Eyes, ears, tongue, nose, skin, hands, legs, vocal organ, generative organ, and evacuative organ.

[154]

Fie! fie! O mind! thou art greedy of objects of enjoyment.
Thou art ignorant, unbelieving, disobedient.
Virtue and vice[1] are two she-goats; tie them to a trifling tether.
Oh! if thou sacrifice them with the sword of knowledge, thou wilt be released from bondage[2].
Take the advice of beneficent wisdom's son[3].
Oh! cut off the bond of delusion[4] which is the root of difference[5].
Offer Mother a little food[6] of the self-realized soul[7].
Rāma Prasāda Sen says, "Mix it with the bliss of Brahman[8] at least".

[1]They are creations of mind and society and so relative and empirical, and should be transcended by the higher knowledge that they are Divine Mother's play. [2]Transmigration. [3]Discrimination arises from vidyā, true knowledge. [4]Nescience. [5]Knowledge of difference. [6]Essential bliss. [7]Delighting in the bliss of the self. [8]Divine bliss. A self-realized soul realizes its innate bliss and Divine bliss. When a soul experiences the divine bliss, it should offer it to Divine Mother.

[155]

O mind! I am very eager to tell thee—
Thou hast played a good game this time.
My heart says, "Dear brother, mind, thou wast mine.
Oh! being a brother, thou didst deceive a brother, handing him over to death.
Thou didst not give the sweet nectar[1] given by my Master to drink in hunger.
Oh! thou didst feed me on some abuses only.
I acted as thou didst guide me; thou didst make my temper uncontrolled.

I have learnt from my Mother, I am not a gardener of a garden".
Prasāda says, "Hast thou resolved to give me up?
Oh! dost thou not know: I have enshrined the benign Kālī in my heart?"

[1]Mantra giving bliss. [2]Spiritual guide.

[156]

O mind! thou art engrossed in merriment.
O mind! thou art in merriment; thou art in merriment.
Thou art in different moods from moment to moment; thou criest in grief and dancest in joy.
In prosperity thou hast bought trifles for the price of gold.
In adversity, O mind, thou hast sold gems to jewellers for the price of trifles[1].
The house of pleasure is the abode of beauty; thy mind is enchanted by that beauty.
When thou wilt be averse to that beauty, what hast thou thought of the worth thereof[2]?

[1]We should be firm in our devotion to God in adversity and prosperity.
[2]Earthly pleasures are transitory and earthly beauty is temporary. Only Divine beauty and bliss are eternal.

[157]

The fisherman has cast his net and is sitting.
What will happen to me, O Mother, in this world?
The fish take their abodes in inaccessible depths of water.
The fisherman hath cast his net over the wide world.
He catches anybody he likes at any time by the hair.
There is no way of escape from the net; Death hath encircled thee; how wilt thou flee? Rāma Prasāda says,
"Call Mother; She will come and overrule Death[1]."

[1]Cp. "The wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life"
—New Testament.

[158]

Say 'Glory to Mother' 'Glory to Mother'.
If they call thee mad, let them do so.
If they call thee bad, what does it matter to thee?
There are two words 'good' and 'bad'; what is good ought to be done[1].
Cut ignorance[2] and delusion[3] asunder with the sword of Kālī's name.
Rāma Prasāda is bewildered by false attachment born of māyā[4].

[1]Virtuous life is the foundation of spiritual life. [2]Of the real nature of things. [3]False attachment. [4]The Ignorance created by cosmic nescience.

[159]

Think by meditating on what my life has been spent.
Why is Her complexion black, Whose name destroys death, and at Whose feet Śiva, the destroyer of Death, lies?
Black colours there are many; but Her complexion is wonderfully black!
If She is enshrined in the heart, Her black complexion illumines the the heart—lotus.
In Her complexion She is ink[1]-black; by name She is Kālī, blacker than the King of Death!
Whoever hath seen that complexion, hath been enchanted by it and liketh no other[2]'.
Prasāda says in curiosity, "Where was such a Lady?
On hearing Her name without seeing Her my mind was absorbed in Her[3]".

[1]It is called 'Kāli' in Bengali. There is a pun on the word. [2]'Her dark complexion dispels darkness.' (Rāma Prasāda).

[3]"His (Kṛṣṇa) name entered through my ear and touched the inmost core of my heart and enchanted it." (Chaṇḍīdāsa).

[160]

Mother Kālī is flying mind-kites[1] in the world-market.
There are the mind-kites flying in the wind of hope, tied to the string of Māyā[2]
And enclosed in bodies with skeletons and nerves.
She made the kites with Her constituents; their workmanship is very intricate.
The string is rubbed with the gum of worldly pleasure, and hath become tough.
When one or two kites in hundrends of thousands are cut asunder,[4] O Mother, thou laughest and clappest Thy hands.
Prasāda says, "His kite will fly away in the south wind[5]
Across the ocean of the world, and quickly fall on the other shore[6]".

[1]Human minds. [2]The Ignorance. [3]Sattva, rajas and tamas. [4]Attain liberation. [5]Grace of God or benign Kālī. [6]Cross the ocean of birth and death.

[161]

O Mother! I am a criminal.
I wander about with this estate[1] which entails loss.
It is given to rambling travellers.
So I shall have to file suits and give increased or decreased rents.
When I shall die, none will accept this estate.
If thou keep it not inact, I shall leave it aside.
If this estate is eroded by the Gaṅgā,
Only the story will live. Where will Thou be and where shall I be[3]?

[1]Because it is on the banks of the Gaṅgā. [2]For increased and decreased land. [3]This poem has an autobiographical touch.

[162]

O Mother ! Śiva hath said :
He who hath surrendered his soul to Thy feet is the crown of all.
Where there is such enjoyment of bliss, there is no disease.
Such is the lot of Her devotee—he lives on fruits of trees and rice-dust[1].
Her devotee behaves at his sweeet will ; none observes the code of conduct of a brahmachārī[2].
Oh ! he goes to many holy places, and then shaves his head.
Prasāda says in fun, "I cherish a desire in my mind :
People tell me—we wish thee dead" !

[1]He becomes indifferent to worldly pleasures, even food and drink. [2]A student who obesrves celibacy and takes vegetarian diet. [3]For heterodoxy. A Sākta does not observe the strict social code observed by a Vaiṣṇava.

[163]

O mind ! what dost thou do, coming to the world !
Oh ! the day is declining ; thy breath[2] is being exhausted.
Thy breath is gradually coming to an end.
'Haṁ' is uttered through inhalation ; and 'saḥ', through exhalation[3].
Thou mutterest 'haṁasḥ' 'haṁsaḥ' day and night.
When thy breath will be exhausted, where will remain thy merriment ?
All will be over without meditating on Durgā.
Double breath is exhaused during walk, more so during slumber ,
Rāma Prasāda says with humility, "Still more during sex enjoyment[4]".

[1]Life. [2]Ajapā or fixed number of breaths allotted to you. [3]'Haṁsaḥ' (jiva) is unconsiously uttered during breathing in an out. By spiritual discipline it is turned into 'so'ham' (He I am). He—Śiva—Brahman. [4]Rigid sex-control and sense-restraint are necessary for a worshipper of Divine Mother (Śakti) in order to transform earthly life into divine life.

[164]

O my mind! if thou make confections,
Pour Kālī's name, sugar of Kāśī into thy mouth[1].
Put the alphabet[2] as a ladle gradually into it.
Give up laziness, and always move thy tongue in the palate[3].
Put the nectar[4] of the moon into ājñāchakra with two petals between the eye-brows.
Be immortal, driking the nectar, and live in the city of immortality[5].

[1]Mutter Kālī's name. [2]Medilate on the letters inscribed on the petals of the six lotuses (chakras). [3]Mutter inaudibly. [4]Nectar is secretedby soma-chakra or sahasrāra above ājñāchakra. [5]Sahasrāra in which Kulakuṇḍalinī is united with Parama Śiva (Absolute).

[165]

O Mother Kālī with a necklace of human heads! what magic hast Thou shown me!
O Mother! thou didst teach me how to call Thee 'mother', and make me mad by calling Thee 'mother' constantly.
Tell me, O Mother Tārā, where Thou didst get such a name full of nectar[1].
Worldly people call me mad Prasāda, whenever they meet me.
Even the members of my family call me names.
But do I deviate from my path, O Mother Kālī, being misled by their abuses?
Let them say whatever they like; I will always mutter 'Kālī', 'Kālī'.
Honour and dishonour are all alike to me; I have cast aside māyā[2],
And made Thy rosy feet the be-all-and-end-all of my life[3]; shall I be misguided by worldly people any more?

[1]Kālī's name is very sweet." (Rāma Prasāda). "Great sweetness lies in Rāma's name" (Tulasi Dāsa). Constant muttering, chanting and remembering a Divine name culminates in the experience of Divine bliss.

[2]The ignorance of the nature of Reality or Divine Mother.
[3]The primary end of life.

[166]

Kālī of terrific mien swings on the lotus of my heart.
The wind of my mind swings Her day and night.
Eternal Divine Mother, Kālī, Brahman, is tied to beautiful Suṣumnā[1]
That runs between Iḍā and Piṅgalā.
Red colour adorns Her blessed feet ; how beauteous they look !
Whose sight at once destroys passions like lust and delusion.
He, who hath seen Divine Mother's swing, leaves his mother's lap[2].
Rāma Prasāda says, "Let Mother Kālī swing".

[1]Divine Mother dwells in suṣumnā between mūlādhāra and sahasrāra.
[2]Is not born again.

[167]

O Kālī ! Thou art fond of cremation grounds[1] ; so I have turned my heart into one[2]
That Thou, a resident of cremation grounds, may dance there unceasingly[3].
O Mother ! I have no other fond desire in my heart ; fire of a funeral pyre is burning there ;
O Mother ! I have preserved the ashes of dead bodies all around that Thou may come[3].
O Mother ! keeping Śiva, conqueror of Death, under Thy feet,
Come, dancing to the tune of music ; Prasāda waits with his eyes closed[4].

[1]Dead bodies of Hindus are burnt. [2]I have burnt all my desires for worldly pleasures. [3]God dwells in the heart of a desireless devotee who loves Him most dearly. [4]God is experienced in the heart.

[168]

O Mother ! give Thy lotus feet to me who have taken refuge with Thee.
O Deliverer with a look of grace !

O Destroyer of fear of Death[1]
O Tārā in the from of 'Om',[2] Consort of the Lord[3] of grace.
O Saviour from the ocean of birth and death !
Qualified[4], unqualified[5], gross[6], subtle[7], root cause, causeless[8] !
Residing on the pure lotus of mūladhāra[9] !
Beyond the comprehension of the Vedas and Tantras !
Father of all and Mother of all[10] !
Manifesting as Puruṣa[11] and Prakṛti[12] !
Thou livest as 'Haṁsa'[13] in all creatures ; Daughter of a mountain[14] !
Creator, Preserver and Destroyer[15] ! threefold Goddess !
The name 'Durgā' is full of nectar, the only abode of beautitude.
The fellow who is plunged in ignorance[16]
Always suffers from threefold[17] misery and sinks in the well of poison[18].
Rāma Prasāda says, "I know his fatal destiny[19]".

[1]Sun-god's son. [2]Mantra of Tarā, which represents Brahman. [3]Śiva. [4]Invested with qualities or personal God. [5]Devoid of qualities or Absolute. [6]Manifest universe. [7]Prakṛti. [8]Absolute. [9]Kulakuṇḍalinī, cosmic energy, Divine Mother. [10]"God is father, mother, friend, master and refuge of all." (Gītā) [11]Īśvara. [12]Māyā, cosmic nescience. [13]Jīva, individual soul. [14]Dakṣa. [15]Of the universe. [16]Of Brahman. [17]Physical, mental and supernatural. [18]Sin. [19]Bondage to birth and death.

[169]

O Durga ! compassionate to the distressed ! what will happen to me ?
Thou art quite free from anxiety ; Thy fallen son is about to sink in the sea of this world of becoming.
There is no boat at this landing place, O Mother ; by what boat shall I cross the sea ?
O Mother ! a slur will be cast on Thy name 'Durgā'. Otherwise deliver me from bondage to becoming.
I call Thee ever and anon ; Thou turnest Thy deaf ear to my invocations ; Thou hast shown Thy father's hard-heartedness in this world.

What is the good of my uttering 'Jai' for Durgā' and taking refuge with Thee every morning[2] ?
Rām Prasāda says, "Mother ! this will do me no harm.
The people of the world will say no more :
"Thy Kāśī is the abode of release, and Thy name is Annapūrṇā[3]".

[1]Victory. [2]cp. "Lord God of Hosts that reign'st on high,
That man is truly blest,
Who only on thee doth rely,
And on thee only rest."
—Milton : *(Psalm)*

[3]Giver of food, beatitude, or Divine bliss.

[170]

Mother with dishevelled hair has world-charming beauty ; so I love Her black complexion.
The virtue of black complexion is well-known to Śuka[1], Śiva[2], gods and sages.
Śiva, Lord of gods, meditates on Her[3] black complexion in His heart.
Black complexion[4] is the life of Vṛndāvana, and makes the milkmaids indifferent to the world.
Kṛṣṇa wearing a garland of wild flowers with a flute in hand becomes Kālī[5] with a sword.
All companions of Mother are of Her age ;
My black Mother shines in their midst as the full moon.
Prasāda says, "When the knowledge of non-difference[6] dawns, black forms blend with one another.
O mind ! hate not ; see one in five[7] and five[8] in one[9]".

[1]A famous saint who narrated the "Bhāgavata" to Parīkṣit. [2]He meditates on Kālī's black form. [3]Kālī's. [4]Of Kṛṣṇa. [5]With a garland of heads. [6]All forms of worship are one. [7]Many. [8]Śāktaism, Śaivaism, Vaiṣṇavism, worship of Gaṇeśa and Sun-worship. [9]The poet's catholicity is shown here.

[171]

O mind ! hate[1] not, if thou desire to go to Vaikuṇṭha[2].
I have ransacked Vedas and Purāṇas (to arrive at truth).

Oh! Mother with loose hair is all—Kālī[3], Kṛṣṇa,[4] Śiva[5] and Rāma[6].
O Mother! Thou bearest a horn as Śiva; Thou playest on a flute as Kṛṣṇa;
Thou carriest a bow as Rāma; Thou holdest a sword in hand as Kālī.
Nude Mother[7] places Her feet on the body of nude Father[8].
Kālī, a resident of cremation grounds, dwells in Oudh[9] and Vṛndāvana[10].
She is Bhairavī[11] in Bhairava's[12] company; a girl in boy's company;
A brother[13] in company with Rāma; beauteous Sīta[14] in company with him.
Rāma Prasāda says, "The nature of Brahman is inderterminable;
My Divine Mother dwells in all creatures[15] at whose feet are Gaya, Gaṅgā and Kāśī[16].

[1]Other forms of worship. [2]Viṣṇu's abode. [3]Śākta's Deity. [4]Vaiṣṇava's Deity. [5]Śaiva's Deity. [6]Rāmāyata's Deity. [7]Kālī. [8]Śiva. [9]As Rāma. [10]As Kṛṣṇa. [11]Female worshipper of Kālī. [12]Male worshipper of Kālī. [13]Lakṣmaṇa. [14]Rāma's wife. [15]Immanent in all creatures. [16]Holy places.

[172]

O mind! why art thou separated from Mother's feet?
Meditate on Śakti[1], O mind! bind Her with the rope of devotion, and thou wilt be released.
In time thou didst not see Her, unlucky as thou art.
Mother came as daughter[2] and mended Rāma Prasāda's fence to deceive Her devotee.
How mother[3] loves her son will be known after his death.
She will cry for an hour or two, and then wash the place where his corpse lay.
Brothers, friends, wife and sons have only a show of love.
They will give an earthen pitcher and eight cowris with the corpse;
They will take off all ornaments from it;

And cover it with another cloth torn in its middle and four corners.

Whoso meditates with undivided mind on Kālī-Tārā[3] will realize Her.[4]

Come out and see Her as Rāma Prasāda's daughter mending his fence.

[1]Divine Mother. [2]Kālī appeared as the poet's daughter to him and helped him mend his fence. [3]Divine Mother. [4]"A devotee of God who fixes his mind on Him, who worships Him, who surrenders himself to Him, and who makes Him alone the goal, must attain Him." "Bhagavad Gītā."

[173]

I know for certain, O Tārā,[1] how merciful Thou art.

Some starve the whole day; others eat their fill, and have gold in their treasury.

Some ride palanquins; others carry them on their shoulders.

Some are wrapped in double shawls; others lack even torn clothes.[2]

[1]Divine Mother

[2]"Who best bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best."

Milton.—

[174]

I shall call Thee 'Mother' no more, O Mother! Thou hast given me untold suffering, and art giving me still.

I was a householder; thou hast made me an ascetic[1]; what greater harm canst Thou do me, O Goddess of loose hair!

I shall go from door to door, beg alms, and appease my hunger.

I call out 'Mother' time and again; is She deaf and blind?

Why should a child suffer so much while mother is alive? Does not a child live when mother is dead?

Rāma Prasāda says, "Why does Mother treat Her child thus ?
Why does She play the enemy to him ?
I ponder day and night, Mother, what greater suffering
Thou wilt give me than repeated pangs of birth."

[1]Rāma Prasāda did not become an asetic, but he mentally renounced the world. He regarded a householder's life as the best.

[175]

What is the need of trifling wealth ?
O ! who cries for Thy wealth ?
If Thou give me the trifle, O Tārā[1], it will be cast aside in the corner of my room.
If Thou give me, O Mother, Thy secure feet, I shall treasure them in my heart.
I have lost the treasure[2], O Mother, Master[3] whispered into my ears through his grace,
Which he muttered and meditated on[4],—through lack of practice.
Prasāda says, "If Thou show me mercy through Thy excellence, O Mother,
Let me abide at Thy feet after my death, uttering glory to Durgā."

[1]Divine Mother. [2]Mantra charged with spiritual power. [3]Guru who transmits spiritnal power to a disciple throngh a mystic sound. [4]Guru awakens a mantra, realizes the Deity it symbolizes, and charges it with spiritual power by muttering it repeatedly and meditating on its meaning for a long period with steadfast devotion.

[176]

I don't want, O Mother, to be a king.
I don't aspire to be a king, O Mother ! let me have only two scanty meals.
Let me thatch my mud house supported by bamboo posts with straw.
My mud hut is a house of gold, O Mother ! of what avail is a building ?

If Thon give me a building, Mother, I shall no more call Thee mother.
If a guest comes to my house, let me not hide my face.
Let me have my bare meals, O Mother, in my bell metal plates and glasses.
Householder's life is the supreme religion; which, for this reason, I cannot renounce.
Let me have my abode at Thy feet[2]; this is the only desire of Rāmā Prasāḍa's heart.

[1]Śāktaism seeks for transformation of worldly life. It is not escapism.
[2]"Those who worship God with devotion abide in Him and He abides in them."

—Bhagavad Gitā, ix, 29.

[177]

Kālī! how long will time be thus wasted?
Without distinction of morning and evening, good time and bad time,
Time walks wilh me always with an iron rod.
While I was in my mother's womb, I hoped to devote my life to austerities;
But passions became my foes.
Childhood passed fruitlessly in ignorance.
Youth passed with young wife in fun and merriment.
Old age passed in disease and decripitude.
Who is more foolish than he who loses carelessly the treasure he obtained?
Prasāda says, "I shall not lose it, but cherish it while yet there is time."

[178]

Of what dost Thou boast, O Mother[1]!
I know Thy origin; of what dost Thou boast?
Thou art mad; Thy husband is mad; Thou livest in company with the mad.
I know Thy origin well; art Thou generous with Thy forbears?
Thou quarrel'st with Thy husband, and canst not live at home.

O Mother ! Thy husband begs and wanders from country to country.

Prasada says, "I abuse Thee because of Thy father's[2] fault.

O Mother ! if anybody mutters my Father's[3] name, he goes to Kailāsa[4].

[1]Durgā. [2]Dakṣa who was reponsible for Durgā's self-immolation in a sacrificial fire. [3]Śiva. [4]The abode of Śiva.

[179]

O mind ! why are thou so foolish ?

Thou art in search of tricks without learning how to catch a serpent[1].

A fowler's son kills birds ; a fisherman's son catches fish.

O mind ! if a snake-charmer's son becomes a cow, does not an iguana bite him ?

Thy caste duty is to play with a snake ; neglect not to learn the mantra to charm it.

O mind ! when father[2] will ask thee to catch a snake[3], thou wilt hang down thy head in shame.

[1]Control Kulakuṇḍalinī (Divine Mother, cosmic energy) in mūlādhāra and unite Her with Śiva, the Absolute, in sahasrāra. She is coiled round Śiva like a snake in mūlādhāra. The poem has an esoteric meaning. [2]Śiva. [3]Kulakuṇḍalinī. The Śākta is referred to here.

[180]

Nude Kāl's[1] dignity has been increased by Śiva[2] with matted hair.

Otherwise why should we call Her 'Mother', 'Mother' day and night ?

Rāma[3] is Master[4] of the world; Śiva is his Master;

He could not comperhend Her Himself, and lay at Kālī's feet[5].

[1]Dynamic Divine will. [2]Absolute. [3]An in carnation of Viṣṇu, the preserver of the world. [4]Guru, teacher. [5]The static Absolute depends upon the dynamic Divine will for the creation, preservation and dissolution of the manifold universe, and happiness and liberation of finite souls.

[181]

O Kālī ! why dost Thou roam about nude[1] ?
Art Thou not ashamed, Mother !
Garb and ornaments Thou hast none ; yet Thou pridest in being King's daughter.
O Mother ! is it a virtue of Thy family that Thou placest thy feet on Thy Husband ?
Thou art nude; Thy Husband is nude; you both roam cremation grounds.
O Mother ! we are all ashamed of you; do put on Thy garb.
Thou hast cast away Thy necklace of jewells, Mother, and worn a garland of human heads.
Prasāda says, "Mother ! Thy fierce[2] beauty has frightened Thy nude Consort[1]."

[1]Because She is one omnipresent Reality. [2]Terrific to the demons and benign to the virtuous.

[182]

O Mother ! do put on Thy robe, and cover Thy nudeness.
I shall place China rose scented with sandal paste at Thy feet.
Thou art Kālī at Kālīghāt, O Mother ! Thou art Durgā at Kailāsa;
Thou art lovely Rādhā at Vṛndāvana, and milkmaid at Gokul.
Thou wast Bhadrakālī, Mother, in the nether world
Worshipped by gods with human sacrifices.
To whose house didst Thou go, Mother ? Who worshipped Thee ?
Red sandal paste I see on Thy brow and China rose at Thy feet.
Thou assurest safety and offerest boon with Thy right hands and bearest a sword and a head in Thy left hands[1].
Thou hast cut off demons' heads and made heaps of them.
Thy sword drips with blood, Mother, Thou wearest a garland of heads.
Look down. Lo ! Śiva is under Thy feet.

Thy gold crown, O Mother, touches the sky.
Being Mother, why art Thou nude before Thy child?
O Mother! Thou art mad; Thy Husband is mad, there
are others also mad.
O Mother! Rāma Prasāda hath become mad[2] in the hope
of getting Thy feet.

[1]Divine Mother is the protector of the righteous, the destroyer of the vicious, and the giver of boons.

[2]God-realization is the poet's primary object.

[183]

O mind! wherefore art thou so much frightened?
Oh! wherefore art thou so much frightened?
Be not afraid of the tempest; that is not really a tempest.
Make the name 'Durgā' thy boat, and row it across the sea[1].
If a watchman challenges thee on the way,
Then tell him straight—"I am Mother Kālī's son."
Prasāda says, "O mad mind! whom dost thou fear?
I have sold my body[2] to the feet of the benign Kālī."

[1]Of birth and death. [2]Completely surrendered myself, body, mind and spirit to Divine Mother.

[184]

O mind! by what spiritual discipline hast thou got the
black Goddess?
Mine eyes and mind are enraptured by the lustre of
black complexion.
In whose house was She living? How hast thou brought Her?
She is not, indeed, black[1]; She illumines my heart like
the full moon[2].
"At sun-rise in the morning", says Prasāda, "Mother's feet
Are fitly adorned, if China roses are offered to them in
worship."

[1]She is black because she is Mahāmāyā-unfathomable deluder.

[2]She dispels darkness of delusion because She is Mahāvidyā—illumining Wisdom.

[185]

Who will understand, O Mother, Thy play?
What didst Thou accept, and what, return?
Thou givest, and then takest back; Thou makest no distinction between morning and evening[1].
Thy endless work is unpreventible; Thou givest one what one deserves[2].
Even forgetful Śiva forgets it, Who is imprisoned under Thy will.
I see as Thou showest me—Thou floatest a stone on water[3].
Thou canst never deceive me by Thy trickery[4].
Rāma Prasād is Thy son; he knows the secret of Thy magic.

[1]Young and old. You kill them alike when their time of death comes. [2]Law of Karma. [3]Make the impossible possible. [4]She is omnipotent and yet rules according to Moral Law.

[186]

Tie the elephant of mind fast to the emerald tether of Kālī's feet.
Cut the fetters of karma[1] asunder with the sharp sword of Kālī's name.
Thou art excessively attached to objects of pleasure, and carriest the merchandise on thy head.
Oh! thou bearest the burden[1] of five elements, and labourest without wages, to boot.
In the constant agony of threefold[3] suffering the heart is rending.
This is the punishment of Kālī black like a column of black clouds. My span of life is being reduced.
Pilgrimage to many holy places is mere fatigue of the body.
Thou wilt get its fruit[4], sitting at home; dost thou not understatnd it by suffering miseries?
Rāma Prasāda says, "I know not what leads to liberation; my studies of the scriptures are fruitless.

Now let my brahmarandra[5] burst by muttering the name of Divine Mother.

[1]Actions done in past births. [2]Body. [3]Physical, mental and supernatural. [4]Liberation. [5]Aperture on the crown of the head through which a liberated soul departs.

[187]

O mind ! awake, awake from the sleep of delusion[1].
How long wilt thou sleep, unconscious ?
Thy life is wasted in the company of woman, frolicks and unsubstantial earthly pleasures[2].
Thou art dreaming[3] impelled by the obsessions of flaming desires.
If sleep thou must, practise the sleep of trance[4].
Thou shalt get Thy cherished wealth, Kālī's blessed feet[5].
The inner soul awakes through meditation enlightened by divine light, reason, and ardent love[6].
O mind ! the life of the cosmos ! awake in trance, and rend the veil of ignorance.[7]

[1]False conceit of 'I' and 'mine.'
[2]Cp. "How false, how vain are Man's pleasures below !
Wealth, Honour, pleasure, what can ye bestow ?"
Coleridge.
[3]Dream motivated by desires for pleasure. [4]Due to meditation, absorption in God. [5]Divine Bliss. [6]True knowledge and ardent love. [7]Of the Divine.

[188]

O Mother Tārā with dishevelled hair ! cast Thy glance at me.
Thou must cut asunder the noose of Māyā[1] round my neck.
Thou hast thrown into a crisis, and entrapped me in the net of Māyā.
Being encircled by flames of misery how long shall I cry day and night ?
O Mother ! being frightened in this world of birth and death I call Thee 'Tara', 'Tārā'.
O Redeemer of sinners ! come and deliver me from sins.

Thou givest some Indra's status, and others, a wretched position.

So partial art Thou that Thou livest with Śiva on cremation grounds.

Virtuous actions lead to happiness, and vicious actions, to chronic misery[2].

Destiny[3] is puissant, and gives one servants and maid-servants.

Twice-born Rāma Prasāda is very poor ; Thou needst not be anxious for his well-being.

If I get Thy secure feet, I do not yearn for wealth.

[1]Delusion, egoism, non-discrimination. [2]Law of Karma. [3]Karma. "God will render to every man according to his deeds". New Testament.

[189]

O Consort of Durgā ! save me from affliction.

My life is at an end ; death is at my door.

O Lord[1] of Kailāsa[2], destroyer of sins, destroy my sins.

Cast aside Thy necklace of serpents ; otherwise this life of mine will be wasted.

Who else will bear my burthen ? Who else will take me across

The grim shoreless ocean of birth and death ?

O Śiva ! if Thou end my misery, my life will be fruitful.

I am utterly destitute of devotion to Thy feet.

Rāma Prasāda is much distressed in the chariot of his body.

Ignorance[3] is my coachman ; the horse of my mind[4] is yoked to the chariot.

He moves as directed by the ignorant coachman, and not on the path of devotion.

Thou hast ruined Thy son, finishing his life by not restraining him from the path of vice[5].

[1]Śiva. [2]Śiva's abode. [3]Of God. [4]Mind is led by ignorance.

[5]This is an invocation to Śiva. A Śākta worships Śiva, Divine Father, also as a Śaiva worships Durgā, Divine Mother also.

[190]

O Mother Tārā ! shall I remain in this condition for ever ?
What will be my destiny, O Mother compassionate to the poor[1] ?
I am devoid of prayer and worship, and extremely poor and destitute.
Wilt Thou fulfil my inordinate ambition ?
Shall I get Thy blessed feet, O Mother Tārā ?
It is well-known to Thee whether I be a good son or a bad son[2]
If a son is bad, does his mother discard him ?
Whom shall I tell my story, O Mother Tārā ?
Prasāda says, "What name shall I mutter except 'Tārā' ?
Thou only canst save, O Mother Tārā ; so Śiva hath given Thee the name 'Tārā'[3].

[1]Cp. "Defend the poor and desolate
And rescue, from the hands
Of wicked men, the low estate
Of him that help demands."
Milton : Psalm.

[2]"God knoweth your hearts." New Testament.

[3]Deliverer.

[191]

O fish of the jīva[1] ! thy life is at an end ; Death has come as a boatman and grim fisherman.
The water of objects[2] draws thee by the bond of Karma[3] ; the fisherman will cast his fatal net.
Why didst thou take thy abode in the water of this world of becoming
Wherein Death is entitled to cast his net[4] ?
Leave this water of sins, and dive deep into the feet of Kālī[5].

[1]Individual soul. [2]Of enjoyment. [3]Actions of past births.
[4]Death is the inevitable end of birth. [5]Sins lead to death ; life divine is eternal. "Lead us from death to immortality".

[192]

Who is Kālī to the left of Śiva?
Her actions are opposed to custom; she is shameless to the corpse[1].
She is immersed in joy, hangs down her head, and smiles.
She looks as if she were Love incarnate.
Yamunā[2], Gaṅgā[3] and Sarasvatī[4] in the middle flow.
She bathes in their confluence[5], and attains great holiness.
The sun and the moon[6] together swallow the blue moon[7].
Fire[8] mixes with air[9], and extinguish the fire[10].
Poet Prasāda says, "Brahman is the lustre of Divine Mother.
On seeing Whom sins and sufferings all disappear."

[1]The poem has an esoteric meaning. Śiva, the Absolute, assumes the form of a corpse. [2]Iḍā. [4]Piṅgalā. [4]Suṣumnā. [5]Ājñāchakra between the eyebrows. [6]Two eyes. [7]Kāli, Divine Mother, Kulakuṇḍalinī in Ājñāchakra. [8]Maṇipura is made of fire. [9]Anāhata is made of air. [10]Suffering. [11]Brahman, Śiva, Absolute is the lustre of Divine Mother, the Supreme Reality. Śāktaism regards the personal Divine Mother (God) as superior to Impersonal Śiva or Brahman like Vaiṣṇavism. "God is the foundation of Brahman." Bhagavad Gītā. Kālī as a nude woman standing on Śiva's chest is a mere symbol.

[193]

What wealth wilt Thou give me? What more wealth hast Thou got?
Whatever wealth Thou hadst Śiva hath set on His bosom.
O Tārā! what wealth Thou hadst hath been exhausted.
Śiva lies under Thy feet, knowing that wealth to be Brahman.
Thy feet are Thy only wealth, which are Śiva's treasure[1].
Śiva lies with His eyes closed meditating on that wealth.
Forgetful Śiva is intoxicated with a drink[2] of hemp leaves;
He responds not when invoked, but He holds the treasure firmly.
Rāma Prasāda says in fun, "Because He will have to share it with Her sons[3].
He keeps His eyes closed and sleeps while awake[4]."

[1]A jīva becomes Śiva (Absolute) through Divine Mother's grace.
[2]Divine bliss. [3]Finite souls devoted to Divine Mother. [4]Feigns to sleep.

[194]

O Tārā ! where is Thy judgment ?
So I ask Thee, O three-eyed Kālī !
How shall I cross the sea of birth and death ? What chance have I got ?
A mother becomes anxious for her worthless child.
O Mother ! why dost Thou behave contrarily, and give sufferring to Thy child, into the bargain ?
Thou knowest not mother's affection for her child as Thou hadst no mother[1].
O Mother ! Thou art daughter of a mountain[2] and stony-hearted ; Thou dost not cast a glance at Thy child even mentally !
Thy child Rāma Prasāda is destitute of all good qualities. So discard not Thy child[3].
Being Mother, Thou persecutest Thy child. Art Thou not afraid of calumny ?

[1]Thou art unborn and eternal. [2]Dakṣa, king of the Himālayas.
[3]Cp. "Defend the poor and fatherless ; do justice to the afflicted and needy." Old Testament, Psalm, 82, 3.

[195]

O mind ! what this desire is thine ?
Wherefore dost thou cherish such evil desire day and night ?
Thou livest on the strength of six passions. Thou prayest to evil desires.
Unless thou live on Thy own strength, how wilt thou get Kālī standing on a corpse[1] ?
Thou desirest to love thy brothers, friends, wife and sons[2].
When thou wilt be overpowered by Death, thou wilt not live in this house[3].
Kālī is invested with six powers of sovereignty[4] and adorned with millions of gems.
Rāma Prasāda says, "The house is empty, wherein unclad Kālī does not live[5].

[1]Śiva pretending to be a corpse. [3]Body.
[2]Cp. "Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure."—R. Browning [4]Ominiscience, omnipotence. etc.
[5]If Divine Mother living in the body is not experienced.

[196]

O mind ! I forbid thee
To cherish any hope from others.
Whose art thou ? Who are thine ? Wherefore dost thou worry for others ?
Oh ! none worries for thee. Canst thou not know it from their attitudes ?
Many share thy happiness ; but none will share thy misery.
When Death will seize thee by the hair, only three-eyed Divine Mother will be with thee[1].
Many subordinates will pray thee in thy prosperity ;
But Rāma Prasāda says, "None remains subordinate when adversity betides one".

[1]Cp "Time's wheel runs back and stops ;
Potter and clay endure"
R. Browning.

[197]

O mind ! how dull is thy intelligence ?
Thou dost not understand, albeit I explain to thee.
Search in thy abode[1] which abounds in gems[2].
Sun-god's son[3] is thy deadly foe. Why dost thou not contrive his death ?
Six beings[4] who live in thy house try to break it.
They live in thy house and yet counsel together to break it.
Make Tārā's blessed feet thy abode ; discard six evil spirits[5].
Rāma Prasāda says, "Three-eyed Kālī is the abode[6] of all evil spirits".

[1]Body. [2]Divine bliss. [3]Death. [4]Passions. [5]Passions. [6]Passions can be conquered by prayer to Divine Mother through Her grace.

[198]

In this world he gets the highest bliss, who knows the blissful Divine Mother.
He goes not on pilgrimage to holy places, and hears nothing but Kālī's glory.

Nor does he pray or worship at prescribed times[1],
He surrenders his will completely to Kālī's will[2].
He who hath made Kālī's blessed feet his only goal easily forgets worldly pleasures[3].
He will cross the sea of birth and death[4] ; tell me why he will miss the root of all.
Rāma Prasāda says, "Why should such a person bear the calumny of the people ?
His eyes are half-closed day and night on drinking the nectar of Kālī's name[5]".

[1]An advanced sādhaka dispenses with pilgrimage and methodical prayer and worship. [2]Complete self-surrender to God is the essence of the cult of Śakti.

Cp. "Thy will be done." [3]Love of God makes love of worldly pleasures insignificant.

[4]Cp. "For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
when I have crost the bar"

Tennyson.

[5]This poem is ascribed to Rājā Rama Krisna Rāya.

Śp , C. U., 1955.

[199]

O mind ! who is thy companion ?
In expectation of whom art thou waiting, O mind ?
The boat of thy body is stranded at the shoal of this world of becoming.
Move on ; move on ; hoist the sail in the name of Master[1], and row the boat.
Prasāda says, "Be erect with six passions[2].
Otherwise, there is a dive into a deep pit of darkness at the junction.

[1]Muttering mantra given by Master and meditating on God.
[2]Conquering passions.

[200]

If the boat is about to sink, O helmsman of mind, let it not sink.
O mind! give up not the helm; pluck up courage; thou shalt be able to row across.
O mind! the oarsmen of my eyes are very ungrateful; they are engrossed in what they look at[1], and entangle[2] me.
Kālī, magician Goddess, hath set a fine trap[3]!
O mind! hoist the sail of devotion in the wind of faith.
Rāma Prasāda says, "Sing the boatman's song in the name[4] of Kālī, and advance."

[1]Sensible objects of pleasure. [2]In māyā. [3]Of māyā. [4]Faith, devotion, muttering of mantra and meditation on God.

[201]

My ill-luck is not gone! my ill-luck out is not gone!
My aunt[1] leaves me not with her deception[2], though she is about to leave[3]; she hath become my foe.
I always desire to get happiness[4].
But my aunt comes and causes me various miseries.
My aunt's deception plays many kinds of tricks, intensifies my miseries and multiplies my difficulties.
Twice-born Rāma Prasāda is tormented by this fear:
He never sat on his Mother's lap after birth[5],
His body hath turned black because of the pangs of hunger[6];
How long can an infant live on others' milk[7]?

[1]Avidyā, ignorance of the Divine Mother. [2]Projection of appearances. [3]Avidyā is nearly conquered. [4]Divine bliss, supreme happiness. [5]The poet lost his mother when he was a child. He has not yet experienced divine bliss. [6]For Divine bliss. [7]Sensuous pleasures.

[202]

Death can come to me no more; doubts in my mind have been dispelled.

Oh ! four Śivas[1] are mounting guard at nine doors[2] of my house.

The house is supported by one post[3], and bound by three ropes[4].

Śiva is sitting on thousand-petalled lotus[5], assuring me of safety.

Divine Śaktis[6] are watchmen at all doors.

My soul hath been awakened by Divine Śaktis, and made fearless.

In the centres of mūlādhāra svādhiṣṭhāna, visuddha and ājñā.

Four Śivas are watching as guards at nine doors.

Rāma Prasāda says, "In this house the sun and the moon are present.

Oh ! they abide in the temple of the heart, and dispel all darkness."

[1]See Introduction. [2]Eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, generative organ and excretive organ. [3]Spinal cord. [4]Īḍā, Piṅgalā and Suṣumnā. [5]Sahasrāra. [6]See Introduction.

[203]

So I am sitting at the foot of the tree[1], in the joy of mind and bliss.

At first, I shall pluck its leaves, then its stems, and, at last, its fruits ;

And cast aside love, hatred, greed and other passions.

I shall live in that bliss[2] wherein false joys and hopes are fulfilled.

I shall pluck the most excellent fruit and go to my abode[3].

I shall throw away good fruits[4] and bad fruits[5], hopes and disappointments.

O mind ! what dost thou do ? Gather nectar[6] with me.

Dive deep into it at one breath as the sun dries up water.

Rāma Prasāda says, "I am purified by being possessed by Tārā.

She doth not know that I have bolted my mind's door tightly.[7]"

[1]The wish-giving tree of Kālī. [2]Divine bliss. [3]Abode of Śiva. [4]Merits. [5]Demerits. [6]See[2]. [7]So that Divine Mother may not escape.

[204]

What is the danger in this ?
Here is the field of Tārā within my body ;
Wherein Śiva, Lord of gods, becoming a good peasant, hath sown a potent mantra ;
And enclosed this body with the fence of virtue with posts of patience in between.
Destroyer[1] of Death hath become its guard. What can the thief of Death do to it ?
On seeing this, six bullocks[2] have left the body ;
And I have cut off the weeds of sins with the sharp sword of Kālī's name[3].
A good shower of love and devotion is pouring on the field night and day.
O brother ! Kālī is the wish-giving tree.
Prasāda says, "The tree of Kālī bears four fruits[4]."

[1]Śiva. [2]Passions. [3]Japa with devotion and love destroys sins. [4]Wealth, happiness, virtue and liberation.

[205]

Shoreless is the ocean of birth and death, which can't be crossed.
Divine Mother's blessed feet are my hope and capital in my voyage.
O Deliverer ! deliver me from distress.
I see fathomless waters and mighty waves.
I tremble all over lest I be drowned and killed.
Grant Thy grace to me, Thy servant, and take me across the sea.
Give me the boat of Thy feet and preserve my life this time.
A tempest is blowing unceasingly ;
My limbs tremble incessantly.
Fulfil my desires ; I mutter the name 'Tārā'.
O Tārā ! Thy name is the essence of the world of appearance.
Time has glided by ; I have not prayed to Kālī.
Prasāda says, "My life is wasted in vain.

Cut my bondage to this world of becoming.
To whom shall I entrust myself, O Deliverer, but my Mother ?"

[206]

Why dost thou desire to carry on trade[1] any more ?
O my mind ! tell me this[1],
Oh ! Divine Mother is indebted[2] to me ; undergo spiritual discipline, and realize thy dues from Her.
A fan is an instrument of a breeze[3] ; this is well-known.
O mind ! Divine Mother is asleep[4] within the body ; wake Her to consciousness[5].
If water enters into the ear, he who knows the secret can draw it out.
O mind ! he draws it out by pouring more water into the ear ; worldly people adopt such means.
There is a priceless gem[6] in thy abode ; but thou art in quest of glass[7] through ignorance.
O mind ! mutter the mantra given by Śrīnātha[8], and open the secret door[9].
Unique grandsons[10] are born, who kill old grandparents.
O mind ! observances of mourning due to birth and death, prayer, and worship are fruitless encumbrances.
Prasāda says, "Thou hast not recognized thyself again and again[11] !
O mind ! thou puttest vermillion on a window's[12] forehead ! what fine judgment is thine !

[1]In worldly affairs. [2]If an aspirant undergoes spiritual discipline, Divine Mother is indebted to him, and She discharges Her debt by granting him God-realization. [3]A breeze exists in a fan, and is manifested by its movement. [4]Kulakuṇḍalinī, dormant Divine Mother. [5]Wake Her from sleep ; rouse dormant Divine Power. [6]Divine bliss. [7]Sense-pleasure. [8]The poet's Guru. [9]Suṣumnā. [10]Pravṛtti, desire for pleasure is a wife of the mind. Ignorance, avidyā, is a child of pravṛtti True knowledge (vidyā) is a child of nivṛtti, desire for renunciation, another wife of the mind. Discrimination (viveka) of self from not-self is a child of true knowledge ; it destroys desire for pleasure (pravṛtti). [11]In many births. [12]Only a woman whose husband is alive bears a vermillion mark on her forehead.

[207]

O Mother ! yours is an asylum of mad Beings. Of whose qualities shall I speak ?

Of two cowives of Śiva, one[1] stands on His breast, and the other[2] climbs on his head.

Thy Husband is mad, O Mother Tārā, Thou art the root cause[3] of His madness.

His two servants[4], who never live in human habitations, are constantly with Him.

Thou, of low habits, O Mother Tārā, ridest a bull instead of an elephant !

Discarding gems and pearls, Thou wearest a necklace of human heads.

Thou roamest wastes and cremation grounds ; O Mother Tārā ! whom dost thou care for ?

Thou must save Rāma Prasāda from the grim ocean of birth and death.

[1]Kālī or Tārā. [2]Gaṅgā. [3]Śiva is intoxicated with Tārā's name and immersed in meditation on Her. [4]Nandī and Bhṛgī.

[208]

Oh ! see my firman.

O messenger of Death ! tell the King of Death ; I am son of Kālī.

Ganeśa gave me the firman with Durgā's permission.

Kārtikeya, my surety, is present ; Nandī is my witness.

The firman is inscribed on the parchment of my heart, which is as holy as the firman.

Śiva Himself hath signed it with His own hand.

I have received the firman from Mother Durgā. Is there any flaw in it ?

Prasāda says, "If thou threaten me, I shall go to Mother's court."

[209]

O brother ! of what use is the body, if it melts not in love for Kālī ?

Oh, fie to this tongue ! which utters not the name of Kālī.

Sinful are the eyes which see not the form of Kālī.

Oh ! how wicked is the mind which is not absorbed in Her feet.

May the ears be struck by lightning,—what is their use ?

Which hear not Her nectarine name, and flood not the eyes with tears.

Oh ! should we desire to have the hands which fill the stomach,

Unless they worship Her with China roses, sandal paste and bael leaves ?

Oh ! of what use are the feet—their labour day and night is fruitless—

Unless they carry us willingly and joyfully to the places where the Images of Kālī are worshipped ?

Can Divine Mother be under the control of one whose senses are not under control[7].

Rāma Prasāda says, "Does a babul tree bear mango fruits[3] ?"

[1]God should be worshipped with the entire body and mind. [2]Righteousness is a precondition of spiritual life.

[3]Cp. Principles of Tantra, p. 964.

[210]

I was not prematurely born[1] ; I shall not be frightened by Thee, if thou brow-beat me.

My wealth[2] is Thy rosy feet, which Śiva cherishes in His heart-lotus.

O Mother ! when I ask Thee for my wealth, Thou art loath to part with it[3], and adoptest various tricks.

I have treasured Śiva's document signed and sealed in my heart.

Now I shall sue Thee in the court and get a decree by one question in cross examination.

Thou wilt know what kind of son I am if Thou contest the suit.

When I shall submit the deed[3] given by Master[4] at the time of hearing,
"The suit between Mother and son will acquire grandour," says Rāma Prasāda,
"I shall withdraw the suit when Thou wilt quieten me and take me in thy arms[5]".

[1]I am not a weakling. [2]Inheritance. [3]God is reluctant to grant divine bliss. [3]Mantra. [4]Guru. [5]Grant me eternal abode in God.

[211]

I have learned : Kālī's court is extremely inaccessible.
An orderly always calls 'plaintiff !', 'respondent !', but none turns up.
What canst thou expect in a court where the bench-clerk is all-in-all ?
I have briefed a hundred thousand pleaders[1] ; who can brief more ?
I repeatedly call Thee by the name Tārā ; hast Thou turned deaf, O Mother ?
I abuse Thee and say : Thou hast turned deaf, and become Kālī.
Rāma Prasāda says "She hath made my life miserable[2]."

[1]The poet is said to have composed so many songs invoking Divine Mother, most of which are lost. [2]She does not respond to my prayer.

[212]

Am I afraid of suffering ? O Mother ! give me suffering in the world ; do I need more ?
Wherever I go, suffering precedes and follows me.
I carry the load of suffering on the head, and set up a market to deal in it.
A worm of poison I live in poison[1], Mother, and preserve my life always with it.
I am such a worm of poison, O Mother, that I move about with a load of poison.

Prasāda says, "Divine Mother ! take down my load ; let me rest a while.

Look here ! people boast of their happiness, but I boast of my suffering."

[1]Pleasure of the senses, which leads to pain. Clinging to it is the root of bondage. Aversion to it is a means of liberation.

[213]

Black clouds[1] have appeared in the sky of my mind.

The peacock of my mind dances and plays in joy.

The cry of Mother roars again and again and rends a mountain.

The gentle smile of the bliss of love adorns the sky as a flash of lightning.

The sādhaka[2]'s gaze is fixed thereon, and tears flow incessantly from his eyes,

Which quickly quench excessive thirst of the chātaka[3] of his heart.

After this birth comes the next birth and then many more births[4].

But Rāma Prasāda says, "There shall be no more birth[5] for him in the womb."

[1]Kālī. [2]Devotee of Kālī. [3]A species of bird which drinks rain-water. [4]Wheel of births and deaths—transmigration. [5]The poet is assured of his salvation.

[214]

O Mother ! what formal prayer[1] prescribed by the Vedas is left for me ?

I have no fame ; disfame is my lot.

Leisure have I none ; all my works are over ; I am in mourning due to birth and death.

Thought[2], my wife, who was barren, hath given birth

To a son, 'knowledge-bliss'[3] by name in favourable time, in good union.

I had evil intelligence, my father, who hath left me.

Māyā[4], my mother, bereft of my father and overwhelmed with grief, hath died.
Disease and grief[5] are my two brothers ; one is miserly and the other is generous.
Hunger and thirst are my two sisters ; none hath any praise[6] for me.
Rāma Prasāda says, "What is the good of living at home, which is full of dangers ?
Let me take the "Rāmāyana" as capital, sing 'Jai for Kālī', dance and wander about."

[1]None is necessary after the attainment of knowledge and bliss. [2]Meditation. [3]Knowledge of Brahman and divine bliss. [4]Nescience, cause of egoism and delusion, wedded to evil intelligence. [5]Born of evil intelligence and ignorance. [6]They are never appeased.

[215]

Oh ! whose wife[1] dances on the battle ground[2] ? Naked[3] damsel[4] stands on nude[5] Śiva.
Streams of blood[6] roll down Her black lips and body ;
As red flowers float on the black waters of Kālindī.
Her face is beauteous like the full moon ; profuse nectar flows from Her laughter.
Heaps of darkness dance in Her black complexion.
Poet Rāmaprasāda says, "On the lotus-feet of Kālī[7]
The yogin meditates in his heart for the state of liberation[8]".

[1]Kālī is Śiva's wife. [2]The universe. [3]She requires no dress because she is infinite. [4]Kālī. [5]Because Śiva is infinite and Absolute. [6]She is the creator and destroyer ; she kills the demons of sins. [7]Dynamic Divine will, [8]She is the giver of liberation and supreme bliss.

[216]

Oh ! my mind wants to go the garden[1] of joy.
(O Mother !) Thou art in my mind. Why dost thou not console it ?
Vārānasī is created by Śiva Who lies at Thy feet.
Yet my mind is eager to go to Kāśī ; how shall I remain at home ?

Assume the form of Annapūrnā[2] ; let Thy feet become Kāśī extending ten miles ; let Gaṅgā with Maṇikarṇikā[3] appear in their nails.

Let the red glow of the dye of lac in Thy feet be the beauty of the spring of Asī[4].

Let me see Kāśī in Thy lotus feet.

Rāma Prasāda is full of agony ; it behoves Thee to give him solace.

What is the use of going to the city, which entails great trouble ?

[1]Vārānasi. [2]A form of Durgā worshipped there. [3]A bathing place on the Gaṇgā, where there is the temple of Annapūrṇā. [4]Kāśī is surrounded by the rivers Gaṅgā, Varuṇā and Asī.

[217]

O Mother ! I know Thee ; I know Thee.

Thou givest him double punishment, who flatters Thee

And chants hymns to Thee with devotion ;

Thou burnest him in agony and grief and despatchest him to the door of death.

Who can be attained easily ? Water flows downward in a channel.

Him who uses force with Thee Thou releasest, for ever at all times under threats !

If one lays not one's finger on Thine eyes, Thou wilt not be impartial in Thy judgment.

Thou didst give Thy feet to the buffalo-demon[1] in fear, which are worshipped by Śiva,

Thou bowest to him for fear of life

Who can speak harsh words to Thee and who can wield a weapon against Thee.

Rāma Prasāda will be blessed by the strength of a particle of Her grace[2].

Worship the blest feet of Kālī in this new city[3] of sense-organs.

[1]Durgā placed one foot on the baffalo-demon and the other on Her lion and killed the demon in a fight with him. [2]God's grace is the cause of beatitude. [3]Body transformed by it. Body is the temple of God. "Ye are the temples of the living God". N. T.

[218]

O Tārā ! dost Thou remember me any more ?

O Mother ! wilt Thou make me as happy[1] as Thou hast made me now ?

If Śiva is truthful, why should I entreat Thee ?

O Mother ! Thou hast played upon me fraud upon fraud ! my right eye throbs[2].

Had I any other resort, I would not entreat Thee !

O Mother ! O Mother ! Thou didst give me hope, but castest me aside, lifting me to a tree.

Prasāda says, "My mind is firm[3] ; the benign[4] Kālī's strength is invincible.

O Mother ! O Mother ! I am crushed out of my life, and got the fee[5] (for my action).

[1]Miserable. [2]A bad omen. [3]Seadfast in devotion. [4]Gracious. [5]Punishment.

[219]

O mind ! thou hast come to carry on trade well,

Floating thy human boat on causal waters[1].

O mind ! thou hast come to carry on trade on the waters of the river of birth and death.

Oh ! some doubled their capital ; some lost their all, capital[2] and profit[3].

Thy body-boat is laden with the freight of earth, water, fire, air and ether[4].

Oh ! six oarsmen[5] did pull them in different directions and drown the boat[6] by jumping on its stern.

"Trade in various merchandise needeth the co-operation[7] of many ;

When the body will disintegrate[8] into the five elements, what will happen[9] ?" says Prasāda.

[1]The universe is generated from the causal waters. [2]Talents given by God. [3]Spiritual advancement. [4]Body is made of them. [5]Passions. [6]Ruined by self-indlugence. [7]Harmony of body and spirit, control of the senses by spirit. [8]Die. [9]Finite spirit will go to the eternal Spirit, Divine Mother, if desires are extinguished.

Cp. "What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be." R. Browning.

[220]

O mind ! thy error is not yet removed.
Thou art engrossed in the worship of Śakti[1] ; Hari[2] and Hara[3] are not yet one to thee.
Wherefore dost thou not comprehend the root principles of Vṛndāvana[4] and Kāśī[5] ?
Thou seekest thy fortune only wandering about and deceiving thyself.
Thou hast done no action, realizing the secrets of the sword[6] and the flute[7].
Wherefore dost thou not meditate on the identity of the Gāṅgā[8] and the Yamunā[9] ?
Prasāda says, "Thou art confused ; thy prayer is hypocritical ;
Thou makest a distinction between Kālī and Kṛṣṇa ; thou art blind[10] with sound eyes.

[1]Divine Mother, Kālī, Tārā, or Durgā. [2]Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa. [3]Śiva. [4]Vaiṣṇavism. [5]Śāktaism. [6]Of Kālī. [7]Of Kṛṣṇa. [8]Sanctified by Śiva. [9]Sanctified by Kṛṣṇa. [10]Kālī, Śiva, and Kṛṣṇa are one God, worshipped by Śāktas, Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas respectably. Only ignorant persons ditsinguish them from one another. The poet's catholicity is expressed here.

Cp "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
"There is one God ; and none other but he."

N. T.

[221]

I am lying at Thy feet, O Mother, Thou dost not look at me even once.
Thou art engrossed in Thy play, O Kālī, Thou art immersed in Thy thought.
What play dost Thou play on earth, in heaven and hell ?
All close their eyes in terror and cry 'Mother !' 'Mother !' grasping Thy feet.
O Mother ! Thou hast great dissolution in Thy hand ; Śiva lies at Thy feet, absorbed in bliss.
Thou laughest aloud (striking terror) ; streams of blood flow from Thy limbs.

O Tārā, doer of good, the good[1] of all, grantor of safety,
O Mother, grant me safety[2].
O Mother Kālī ! take me in Thy arms ; O Mother Kālī ! take me in Thy arms.
O Mother ! come now as Tārā[3] with a smiling face and clad in white ;
As dawn descends on dense darkness of the night.
O Mother ! terrific Kālī ! I have worshipped Thee alone so long.
My worship is finished ; now, O Mother, bring down Thy sword[4].

[1]Cp. "There is none good but one, that is God." N. T.
[2]Cp. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."
"He only is my rock and my salvation ; he is my defence."
O. T. Ps.

[3]Saviour. [4]Cease to be a war-Goddess fighting demons or sins.

[222]

Thou hast done good to me, O Mother, as Thou hast not given me wealth.
Thou hast not given me worldly prosperity : this is the consequence of Thy good.
Thou hast not given me ; so Thou hast not received from me ;
Thou wilt not give me ; so Thou wilt not receive from me.
What is my loss in this ?
Let there be a game[1] day by day ; I am ready for this ;
This time[2] the game is nearly up.
O Mother ! if Thou hadst given me, I would have given Thee, received from Thee and eaten, being Thy labourer[3].
This time I have not worked as Thy labourer ; how shall I beg of Thee my wages ?
On what strength shall I compel Thee to give me my wages ?
Where art Thou ? Where am I ? I make noise in vain.
O Tārā ! making noise is fruitless ; Thine is a tortuous[5] course of action ; but my distress is unbearable.

O Mother ! this is midnight[7] of the new moon ; my mind awakes[8] in meditation and trance.
Thy action is so cruel ;
I have lost this world[9] and the next world[10] ; both worlds have I lost.
The chakora[11] of my heart hath not received the nectar[12] of the moon.
O Mother ! I draw my body-boat to the shore[13] ; my mind draws it against the shore[14] ; so grim is the bond of my karma[15].
Rāma Prasāda says, "My mind is anguished being pulled in opposite directions ; it is a pot-bellied thief."

[1]Between the poet and Divine Mother. [2]In this life. [3]Doing all actions as worship of God. "All work is worship." (Ruskin). [4]Salvation. [5]Crooked. God gives misfortunes and adversities to His devotees, and then gives them salvation. [6]Due to bondage. [7]Favourable for the worship of Divine Mother. [8]Dormant Divine power is awakened. [9]Not got worldly enjoyments. [10]Have not attained salvation. [11]A bird said to live on the nectar of the moon. [12]Divine bliss. [13]Beyond time and space. [14]Towards the temporal world. [15]Actions done in the past births.

[223]

O mind ! behold thyself[1] in thyself[2] ; go not to any other's house.
Thou must not go anywhere ; thou shalt get thy treasure here ; search for it in thy heart[3].
The supreme wealth is a touch-stone[4] which can yield untold wealth[5].
Many gems are scattered about at the back-door of the wish-giving gem[6].
Pilgrimage[7] is mere fatiguing journey ; be not restless in mind over this.
Bathe at joyful Triveṇī[8] and cool thyself at Mūlādhāra[9].

Rāma Prasāda says, "This world is a false magic show[10] ;
O ! thou dost not know the Magician[11] who resides in thy body."

[1]Your true self—eternal spirit, a spark of God, or identical with Him. [2]Body. [3]God dwells in everyone's heart. Body is the temple of God. [4]God. [5]All kinds of good. [6]God. [7]It is an inessential aid to the evocation of religious consciousness. [8]Confluence of the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā and the Sarasvatī,—Iḍā, Suṣumnā and Piṅgalā at Mūlādhara or Ājñā—Chakra. [9]The lowest chakra. [10]Appearances. They are really manifestations of God but appear to be material and undivine. [11]God or Divine Mother.

[224]

O Tārā ! what more harm wilt Thou do me ?
Look here, Mother Durga !
The utmost harm Thou canst do me is to take my life.
But I care not for this ; let it remain or go ; this life must go.
What is the use of my brooding, if my mind is fixed on Thy secure feet ?
O Śiva's Consort ! what more fun wilt Thou show me by increasing the fury of the waves[1] ?
Dost Thou think the oarsmen to be so inexpert that they will sink the boat in a tempest ?
If I myself sink my boat in the ocean of birth and death,
I shall dive and drink water being immersed in Thy secure feet[2].
I am dying or about to die ; what more shall I get in the world ?
I stand as a mere wooden frame[3] and count as a man[4]
Prasāda says, "When I shall depart, Thou[5] wilt be left behind ;
Then Thou wilt judge if Thou[6] art good or if I[7] am good."

[1]Giving me misfortunes and calamities. [2]A devotee immersed in communion with God does not care for misfortunes or death. [3]Instrument of God. [4]Having freedom of will. [5]God is eternal. [6]Worshipped. [7]Worshipper. Salvation belongs to God, and not to the aspiring soul. God's grace only can grant it to the seeking soul.

[225]

Oh ! I die of anguish of mind.

O Mother ! Whom but my Mother[1] shall I tell the tale of my sufferings ?

How incredible is my story ? what will people say when they hear of it ?

He whose Mother is the Queen[2] of the world dies of starvation !

Is he Thy pet child whom Thou hast kept in supreme happiness ?

O Mother ! am I so guilty that I can't get even salt with my cooked potherb ?

Thou didst call[3] me and take me on Thy lap, and then dash my heart[4] on the ground !

O Mother ! Thou hast acted like true Mother ; people of the world will praise Thy work[5] !

[1]Divine Mother. "O ye ! sons of the immortal !" Śv. Up. [2]The world is the kingdom of God, not of man or of Satan. [3]Bring into existence. [4]Give misfortunes and sufferings. [5]Persecution of a devotee.

[226]

O Mother ! I am much frightened.

There my account-book[1] is ready.

I did as I was driven by my passions ; I thought not of its consequence.

There Chitragupta, a very hard accountant, hath recorded whatever I did.

He hath carried over the accounts of my past births[2].

As you sow, so you reap[3] ; actions of my past births have borne fruits[4].

My expenses[5] are greater than my incomes[6] ; how shall I be saved[7] in the King's court ?

There is a ray of hope in Rāma Prasādas mind because of the strength[8] of Kālī's name.

[1]Record of virtues and vices. [2]Meritorious actions and vicious actions in past births. [3]Moral Law. [4]In this life. [5]Sins. [6]Virtues. [7]From punishment. [8]Divine names burn all sins and give beatitude.

[227]

Is She[1] only Śiva's Wife
To Whom the Destroyer of Death[2] makes obeisance ?
She also lives in six lotuses[3].
She is the chief of all[4], and abides in the thousand-petalled lotus[5].
She kills the foes as unclad and standing on Śiva's heart.
O mind ! tell me what kind of Lady She is ; She kicks Her Husband in the chest !
Prasāda says, "Divine Mother's play is an inscrutable mystery !
O mind ! exert thyself to the utmost ; thy intelligence will be purified[6]".

[1]Kālī. [2]Śiva. [3]Chakras. [4]Gods and goddesses living at the chakras. [5]As Divine Power completely manifest and embracing Śiva, Brahman, or Sacchidānanda. [6]Will know the truth.

[228]

O mind ! revolve the wheel of the tree of life[1] in this grim world.
The Supreme Yogin[2] smiles in amusement ! thou dost not know Him.
A couple of self-born Śivas[3] are on the chest of a young wife.
O mind ! worship them as Śiva[4] Whom thou dost worship with beal leaves.
At home there are the words of a young wife ; outside there are the sounds of drums and songs of male and female devotees of Śiva armed with tridents in a festival[5].
O mind ! they are beating drums again and again.
Thou hast climbed a high pole of desire[6] and broken thy ribs, falling[7] on the ground.
O mind ! thou hast trifled with so intense pain ! thou are so lucky[8] !
A high pole of hope[9] thou hast selected as the most coveted object.

O mind! what thou callest love is the bond of delusion[10] to which a hook[11] is attached.

Prasāda says again and again, "Kernel[12] will grow within a shell[13],

O mind! when thou wilt die[14], thou wilt get a trumpet[15]; call Mother Kālī[16]".

[1]With mind fixed on Kālī. [2]Parama Śiva in sahasrāra. [3]Breasts which evoke lust should be worshipped as Śiva. [4]Supreme Absolute. [5]A high pole is fixed to which rods are attached from which Śiva's devotees hang by means of ropes tied to their waists and undergo torture. This practice, an adaptation of the Buddhist worship of the wheel of Moral Law, is no longer in vogue. [6]For sensual pleasure. [7]Being frustrated. Desires are never gratified by their satisfaction. Pleasures result in pain. [8]Ironical; unlucky. [9]Inordinate hope of earthly pleasure. [10]Due to Māyā. [11]The self is attached to the world by it. [12]Experience of Divine bliss. [13]Sense-pleasure. [14]Blowing one's horn away—dying. [15]Of glory. [16]Calling a Divine name and worshipping a young wife as Kālī or Śiva transforms lust into the experience of the Divine. Rāmakṛṣṇa worshipped his young wife Sāradāmaṇi as Divine Mother, and had no physical union with her. He was the most glorious example of the cult of Śakti.

[229]

Days will somehow pass; this day will pass; only Thy story[1] will endure.

Countless stains will stick to Thy name 'Tārā'.

I came to this world-mart; after marketing I am waiting at the landing place.

O Mother! the sun is about to set[2]; take me in the boat.

The boat-man fills the boat with the freight of solvent travellers, and leaves a distressed man behind.

O Mother! he demands fare from him; but where will he get money?

Prasādā says, "O stone-hearted Woman[3]! vouchsafe Thy glance at him and give him fare[4].

Oh! I begin to swim in the ocean of becoming, chanting Thy glory."

[1]Of unkindness. [2]Death is approaching. [3]Unkind Goddess.
[4]Cp. "Give ear to my prayer,
O God, and hide not thyself from my supplication."
OT., Ps., 55, 1.

[230]

Can I lay blame at Thy door ?
I suffer for my own sins[1].
As a dog prowls at a confectioner's door because of greed, leaving his master,
So I disregard Thee in greed for ephemeral pleasures in this world.
Thou desirest to drag me to Thy presence, but I cling to the world as a goat chings to his tether.
A noose strangles my throat, and I bleat like a goat, but I can never walk on a straight path.
O Mother ! a goat delights in a goat's pleasures ; how will he turn a human being ?
Thou art very gracious to Prasāda ; so I move in human society.
Prasāda is Thy foolish son who indulges in tall talks,[2] but never acts upon his counsels !
O Mother ! chastise him by dragging him by the hair and dealing him blows with shoes[3].

[1] "Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according to his work." OT., Ps.. 62, 12.

[2] "And why call ye me Lord, and do not the things which I say ?" NT., St. Luke, 6, 46.

[3] "God is a just Judge and severe." Milton : Ps.

[231]

O Serpent Power ! how long wilt Thou sleep at mūlādhāra[2] ?
Awake, awake in my mind, awake, awake at sahasrārā[3].
Lulling me to the sleep of ignorance[4], Mother, wherefore dost Thou feign to sleep ?
My eternal sleep[5] is near at hand to exhaust my breath[6].
Wherefore dost Thou sleep night and day ? Wherefore dost Thou sleep in the day time ?
O Daughter of Dakṣa ! I call Thee 'Mother,' 'Mother', in fear of death.
O Mother ! Prasāda hankers for release undergoing eight million births and deaths[7].

O Mother with dishevelled hair ! release me from bondage ;
So that I am no more born in this ever-changing world[8].

[1]Divine Power coiled, dormant and unmanifest. [2]The lowest chakra. [3]The highest chakra in which Divine Power is awakened, manifest, and active. [4]Of the spiritual nature of the finite soul. [5]Death. [6]Which utters 'haṁsa' throughout life. [7]Transmigration. [8]In release 'haṁsa' (jīva) becomes 'so'ham' (Śiva).

"We and our Father one !" Coleridge.
"Salvation belongeth unto the Lord."
OT., Ps., 3, 8.

[232]

Keep dear Mother Kālī with love[1] in thy heart.
O friend ! (mind !) Let us see Her, and none else.
Cheating passions[2] of Her sight, let us feast our eyes on Her beauty.
Let us keep the tongue in our company ; let it also call 'Mother'[3].
Keep ignorace[4] with its wicked counsels at an arm's length.
Keep knowledge[5] as thy guard, and ask him to be very vigilant.
O friend ! Prasāda's mind ! I entreat thee with humility :
"If a poor man gets wealth[6], does he keep it elsewhere ?"

[1]God is love and is attained through love. Śāktaism agrees with Vaiṣṇavism in making devotion and love the means of God-realization.
"Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart." NT., St. Luke, 10, 27.
"Continue ye in my love." NT., St. John, 15, 9.
[2]Conquest of passions is a condition of the experience of Divine Mother.
[3]Japa leads to beatitude. [4]Ignorance of man's spiritual nature is the cause of sensuality. [5]Knowledge of man's spiritual nature is the cause of virtuous life. [6]Divine Mother.

[233]

I have resolved well so late ;
I will strike out my own path.
I will not call Thee 'Mother' ; I will go to my step-mother Gaṅgā.

I will purchase my path to liberation from bondage by sight
and touch of Her.
Being Thy son, if I take refuge with my step-mother,
That will be Thy humiliation.
Thinking so Thou wilt take me in Thy arms.

[234]

I shall no more be born in this world ; I shall no more be
born in a mother's womb[1].
Kālī is Durgā and Bhairavī ; She is infinite according to the
Vedas.
Śiva, the doer of good, only has known the greatness of Tārā.
By chanting my Mother's name many a sinner hath been
saved[2].
O Mother ! show me the mount Kāilāsa[3], the holy city, this
Time.

[1]The poet has experienced his nontemporal, non-physical, transcendence in life. [2]Cp. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." O T., Ps., 51. 2.
[3]Grant me salvation.

[235]

Why dost Thou[1] not realise it in Thy mind ?
Dost Thou not know—her[2] sulks will not disappear easily ?
Thou playest fraud upon her who serves Thee with great
affection !
If Thy offence be not redressed, she will speak to Thee no
more.
For Thy fault that hath made her sulky
O Providence ! O the treasury of excellence ! why dost
Thou not entreat her[3] ?

[1]God. [2]A devotee's soul. [3]A devotee is offended by God's turning away from her. God should entreat her to turn towards Him.

[236]

O bewildered mind ! why art thou afraid ? Mutter 'Durga',
'Durga'.
She is the protector of the gods[1] and the destroyer of the
demons[2].

She is the destroyer of Death[3], and the strength of the weak[4]
I have heard : Her priceless name bears four boons.
Her name that delights the heart is a remedy for death[5].
Prasāda is dejected ; his mind is very restless.

[1]The righteous. [2]The vicious. [3]Giver of immortality. [4]"Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee." OT., Ps., 84, 5.

[5]Japa of a Divine name leads to life eternal.

"O Lord, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." OT., Ps., 8, 9.

[237]

O mind ! whom dost thou serve ?
O ! who art thou ? Who is thy master ? Whose servant art thou ?
Thou wilt have to render accounts ; prepare the account-book.
Oh ! I see : thy receipts[1] are nil ;
Show loan[2] as receipt, O mind.
Twice-born Rāma Prasāda says, "Tārā's name[3] is the essence of all."
O mind ! why dost thou labour without wages
In service of thy wife and children[4] ?

[1]Virtues. [2]God's gifts. [3]Divine name is equal to God. [4]Transitory pleasures. "Lover and friend thou hast removed, and sever'd from me far : They flee me now whom I have loved, and as in darkness are." Milton, Ps.

[238]

Bravo ! O benign Kālī ! Thou hast thrown the world under a magic spell !
Thou hast thrown Thy blest feet, magic stone, at the world as their lot[1].
Thou art such a magician that Thou hast turned Father[2] mad.
Thou art Puruśa[3] and Prakṛti[4] invested with the guṇas[5]

I am perplexed by doubt : Thy blessed feet Śiva[6] could not get.
O Prasāda ! how wilt thou get ? thou too hast turned mad, meseems.

[1]God-realizsation is the destiny of every person. "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup : thou maintainest my lot."
OT., Ps., 16, 5.

[2]Śiva. [3]Absolute devoid of sattva, rajas and tamas—guṇas. [4]Matrix, root, of the world. [5]Sattva, rajas and tamas (essence, energy and inertia). Divine Mother is both static Absolute and dynamic Divine Power with guṇas, transcendent of, and immanent in, the world.

[239]

Dost Thou intend to escape from me, O Mother ?
I am self-realized[1] in my prayer ; who can make me unrealized[2] ?
Thou knowest how to do good to others ; but thou knowest not how to do good to Thine own !
When I shall draw Thee by the root[3], how canst Thou keep aloof from me ?
I am strongly bound to Thy blest feet, and unshakably firm in my strength[4].
I know : salvation is easy to attain ; what more wilt Thou give me ?
I have tied Her fast to my heart-lotus[5].
Let me see how Thou canst untie Rāma Prasāda's knot."

[1]Siddha. [2]Asiddha. [3]Awaken kulakuṇḍalinī, Divine Power, and conduct Her upward through the chakras to sahasrāra. [4]Of being tied to Divine Mother. [5]Anāhata.

[240]

I want to make an Image[1] with earth under illusion of mind.
Is Divine Mother earthen ? I labour earth in vain.
She hath a sword[2] in hand, and a necklace of heads. Is that Mother an earthen Image ?
Can an earthen Image[3] sooth the anguish of mind ?

I have heard : Mother's complexion[4] is dark, which illumines the world.
Can an earthen Image be made so dark by painting it with a black dye ?
Mother hath three eyes : sun, moon, and fire[5].
What artist will make an Image[6] with such eyes ?
Kālī is the destroyer of evils[7]. Can She be mere earth and straw ?
She will wash off the stain of mind[8], and show Kālī[9] to Rāma Prasāda.

[1]God is Spirit. An Image is a symbol to an unrealised devotee, but infinite Spirit to a realised soul. [2]Destroyer of the wicked. [3]Only God as Spirit can do so. [4]God's lustre can illuminate the darkness of mind and manifest the world. [5]God is omnipresent and omniscient. [6]An Image is not so. [7]As holy and righteous, God is the destroyer of evils. [8]Purify the soul and cleanse it of all sins. [9]The worship of an Image as a symbol finally leads to the realisation of God as infinite Spirit that dwells in each creature and transcend's the universe.

[241]

O Kālī ! row me across the sea of birth and death.
O Durgā ! I have fallen into an impassable sea ; give me blessed feet through compassion[1].
O Durgā ! making me undergo ten million births[2], Thou hast now caused my birth in a human body[3].
My body is filled with sinful acts ; what will be my fate[4] ?
Twice-born Rāma Prasāda says, "Thou broodest in vain ;
Thou shalt attain salvation ; Divine Mother shall keep thee at Her blessed feet."

[1]"Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation." OT., Ps., 38, 22. "Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, and plenteous in mercy and truth." Ibid, 86, 14. [2]Transmigration. [3]Man has evolved at the end of biological evolution.

[4]"For thou art good, thou Lord, art prone
To parden, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou alone,
To them that on thee call"

Milton, Ps., 86.

[242]

O tongue ! mutter 'Kālī', 'Kālī'.
O mind ! my Mother Kālī[1] dwells in the chariot[2] of six wheels[3].
Three ropes[4] are fastened to mūlādhāra[5] nearby.
The charioteer[6] drives the chariot aided by five Śaktis[7] from country to country[8].
The pair of horses run and jump in the day.
They cannot move their heads when the chariot goes out of order.
Pilgrimage to holy places is fruitless travel[9] ; be not restless in mind over it.
O mind ! sit at the confluence[10] of Iḍā, Suṣumnā and Piṅgalā, and cool thyself in thy heart.
When five elements will return to their abodes[11], Rāma Prasāda[12] will be left behind.
O mind ! time runs fast in vain ; call the two-lettered Deity[13] to thy best ability.

[1]Cp. "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." NT. [2]Body. [3]Six chakras. [4]Iḍā, Suṣumnā, and Piṅgalā. [5]The lowest chakra. [6]Śiva. [7]Dākinī, Lākinī, Rākinī, Śākinī, and Hākinī. [8]Different planes of spiritual experience. [9]Because Divine Mother resides within the body in the Brahmanāḍī. [10]Mūlādhāra, ājña-chakra. [11]On death. [12]His soul. [13]Kālī. Kālī is Divine Power immanent in, and transcendent of, the universe, and dwelling in each body, and not a dark nude woman standing on Śiva's breast,—which is a symbol of an inscrutable truth to be realized in spiritual experience through prayer and meditation.

[243]

O Mother ! this is the desire of my heart :
I meditate on Divine Mother in Brahmarandhra[1] in the thousand-petalled lotus[2] with the letters 'ha' 'la' and 'kṣa'[3]
In earthy mūlādhāra lotus of four petals with the letters 'va' 'śa', 'ṣa' and 'sa' ;
Wherein Serpent Power[4] encircles Śiva in three coils and a half with Śakti Dākinī.

In watery svādhiṣṭhān lotus of six petals with the letters 'ba', 'bha', 'ma', 'ya', 'ra' and 'la';
Wherein resides Śiva with Viṣṇu and Varuṇa with Śakti Rākinī at the confluence of Iḍā, Suṣumnā and Piṅgalā;
In triangular and fiery maṇipura lotus of ten petals with the letters 'ḍa', 'ḍha', 'ṇa', 'ta', 'tha', 'da', 'dha', 'na', 'pa' and 'pha';
Wherein dwells Śiva with Śakti Lākinī;
In the hexagonal and airy anāhata lotus of twelve petals with the letters 'ka', 'kha', 'ga', 'gha', 'ṅa', 'cha', 'chha', 'ja', 'jha', 'ña', 'ṭa', and 'ṭha';
Wherein resides, Śiva with Śakti Kākinī;
In ethereal Viśuddha lotus of sixteen petals with the letters 'a', 'ā', 'i', 'ī', 'u', 'ū', 'ṛ', 'ṝ', 'l','ll', 'e', 'ai','o', 'au', 'aṁ' and 'aḥ';
Wherein Viṣṇu sits on an elephant with Śiva and Śakti Śākinī;
In the mental ājñāchakra of two petals with the letters 'ha' and 'kṣa';
Wherein Śivalinga resides in chakrayoni[5] with Śakti Hākinī;
Where nectar[6] flows from the seed of the lotus.

[1]Aperture in the centre of the top of the head. [2]Sahasrāra. [3]Fifty letters are inscribed on the petals. [4]Kuṇḍalinī, dormant Divine Power. [5]Śiva—Śakti. [6]Of Divine bliss. A sādhaka drinks the nectar in an advanced stage of sādhanā. God with His Power resides in the body which is a microcosm of the macrocosm. Kālī is an esoteric Divine Power.

[244]

O Tārā! Thou art in my heart; O Mother! Thou art in my heart.
O Divine Mother! Serpent Power[1]!
Thou bidest in mūlādhāra[2] and in sahasrāra[3]
And also in maṇipura[4], the city of the wish-giving gem.
The Gaṅgā[5] is to the right, the Yamuna[6] is to the left,
And the Sarasvatī[7] flows in the middle wherein Śiva[8] and Śakti[9] bide.

Thou art of the form of a red serpent[10] fast asleep[11] round Śiva,

Meditating on Whom a person becomes blessed[12].

Thou art in the form of letters[13] in mūlādhāra, svādhiṣṭhāna, maṇipura at the navel, anāhata, and viśuddha lotuses

'Va', 'sa', 'ra', 'la', 'ta', 'ka', 'pha', 'ṭha', and sixteen vowels reside at the throat.

'Ha' and 'kṣa' dwell in the middle of the eyebrows[14] ; my Master gave me this instruction ; meditate on these in the body.

Five gods,[15] Brahmā and others and six Śaktis [16] Dākinī and others abide in the lotuses ;

Which ride an elephant, a crocodile, a ram, a deer, and a second elephant[17].

When breath is suspended, these are experienced, and a humming sound[18] of an intoxicated black bee is heard.

Do take earth, water, fire, air, (ether, and mind)[19] quickly, uttering the mystic sounds 'yam', 'ram', 'lam', 'vam', 'ham', and 'haum'[20].

Turn and cast Thy look of grace ; again there is creation ; nectar flows from Thy feet.

Thou art nāda[21], Thou art bindu[22], Thou are the receptacle of nectar[23] like the moon ; there is one Self[24] ; who can create difference therein ?

Methods of prayer differ ; there is no grief over these ; they are the menifestations of Mahākālī [25] in different times.

He who is awakened by Her falls not asleep again ; he is a jīva ; turn him into Śiva[7].

He is worshipped by his daughter, mukti ; is he born again in the world and engrossed in worldly pleasures ?

Penetrate ājñāchakra and remove Thy devotee's sorrow ; unite as Haṁsi[29] with Haṁsa[30]

Who bides in the thousand-petalled lotus[31] at the top of the head above the lotuses of four[32], six[33], ten[34], twelve[35], sixteen[36], and two[37] petals.

Parama Śiva[38] resides there. On hearing Prasāda's words a yogin floats on the ocean of bliss.

[1]Kulakuṇḍalinī in mūlādhāra as dormant Divine Mother (Power). [2]The lowest chakra. [3]The highest chakra. [4]The chakra at the navel. [5]Iḍā. [6]Piṅgalā. [7]Suṣumnā. [8]God, Divine father. [9]God's Power, Divine Mother. [10]Kulakuṇḍalinī. [11]Dormant, coiled, unmanifest. [12]Fulfilled. [13]Fifty letters. [14]See 225. [15]Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Sadāśiva, and Parama Śiva. [16]Dakinī, Rākinī, Lākinī, Kākinī, Śākinī, and Hākini. [17]Supporting mūlādhāra, svādhiṣṭhāna, maṇipura, anāhata, and viśuddha. [18]Different subtle sounds are heard at the different chakras as the effects of concentration on Divine Power at them when the mind becomes tranquil and devoid of agitation. [19]Mūlādhāra is made of earth ; svādhiṣṭhāna, of water ; maṇipura, of fire ; anāhata, of air ; viśuddha, of ether (ākāśa) ; and ājñā, of mind (manas). [20]Mystic formulae. [21]Creative sound, Aum, Om, Divine Śakti (Power). [22]Śiva, God. [23]Divine bliss. [24]Ātman is one. Śāktaism is monistic. [25]Supreme Divine Mother. [26]Individual soul. [26]Supreme soul. [28]Śiva's daughter. When a jīva becomes Śiva he does not care for emancipation. [29]Divine Śakti (Mother). [30]Supreme God, Parama Śiva. [31]Sahasrāra. [32]Mūlādhāra. [33]Svādhiṣṭhāna. [34]Maṇipura. [35]Anāhata. [30]Viśuddha. [37]Ājñā. [38]In sahasrāra.

[245]

Oh ! I drink not wine[1] ; I drink nectar uttering 'Jai[2] for Kalī'.
God-intoxicated mind intoxicates me ; drunkards drinking wine call me a drunkard.
Is mere drinking of wine enough for the worship of Kālī ? people call them drunkards who only drink wine.
Who knows the secret of the rituals prescribed by the Trantras ? only one mad for Kālī knows it.
Nectar is distilled with molasses[3] given by Master[4] burning the torch of desires[5] for pleasures, O Mother,
By the brewer of knowledge[6], by drinking which my mind be comes drunken ;
I purify it with a mantra, muttering 'Mother Tārā'.
Rāmā Prasāda says, "If thou drink such nectar[7], thou shalt get four ends of life[8]."

[1]See Introduction. [2]Victory. [3]Mantra. [4]Guru. [5]All desires for earthly pleasures should be conquered. [6]Knowledge of Divine Mother pervading the universe consumes all desires for pleasures. [8]It flows from soma chakra or ājñāchakra. It is actually tasted by a worshipper of Divine Mother, which makes him God-intoxicated.

[246]

When shall I be a resident of Kāśī[1] ?
Going to the garden of joy when shall I dispel my grief ?
When shall I worship Viśveśvara[2] with Gaṅgā water and bael leaves ?
If I die at Vārāṇaśī[3] either on land or in water, I shall attain salvation.
When shall I take refuge with Annapūrṇā[4] the presiding Deity of the golden city,
And dance in joy and strike my cheeks[5] in honour of Śiva ?

[1]A holy place. [2]Śiva worshipped there is called Viśveśvara. [3]Kāśī. [4]A form of Durgā worshipped there. [5]A worshipper of Śiva utters a sound by doing so.

[247]

Who wants to go to Gayā, Gaṅgā, Prabhāsa, Kāśī and Kañchī[1],
If I breathe my last by uttering 'Kālī,' 'Kālī' ?
Does he reqire prayer and worship, who utters 'Kālī' three times[2] ?
Prayer searches for him, but never finds a clue to him[3].
His mind becomes averse to charity, sacrifice and other religious rites[4].
Prasāda's sacrifice is surrender[5] to the blessed feet of Divine Mother.
Who can know the infinite virtues[6] of the name 'Kālī',
Whose excellence is chanted by Śiva, the Lord of Gods, with His five mouths ?

[1]Holy places. [2]At dawn and noon and sun-set. [3]He dispenses with the necessity of regular prayer because he is self-realised. [4]Rituals. [5]Complete self-surrender. [5]Divine name ls identical with the Divine essence, infinite being-knowledge-bliss.

[248]

Tell me why tears spring to my eyes when I mutter Kālī's name.

Thou hast vast experience and great wisdom ; ascertain its cause and tell me aright.
Methinks its cause is this : the body is like wood soaked in water.
The fire of Kālī's name[1] produces water in the tongue and makes it overflow.
If I meditate on Kālī with closed eyes and fall asleep[2],
I behold a clear stream of water of the Gaṅgā on Śiva's head[3].
Master hath said : the centre[3] between the eyebrows is Triveṇī.
The confluence of the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā and the Sarasvatī[5].
Prasāda says, "O friend mind ! I beg of thee :
Give me an abode[6] on the bank of the confluence[7] near thee."

[1]Japa produces a fire in the body,—a fire of spiritual knowledge. [2]Fall into a trance (samādhi)—yoganidrā, meditative trance. [3]A yogin sees a stream of clear water in his forehead—a spiritual vision. [4]Ājñā chakra. [5]Iḍā, Suṣumnā and Piṅgalā. [6]Fixed abode of the soul. [7]Ājñāchakra made of mind (manas). A soul advanced in Tantric yoga rouses Serpent Power, makes it penetrate five chakras, and abides permanently in Ājñāchakra. The song has an esoteric meaning,

[249]

Śiva will smart in the chest, O mad Woman ! get down and stand aside.
Śiva is not dead ; He is alive and in trance, the greatest Yogin.
His body is permeated by poison ; He cannot, O Mother, bear the weight of Thy body.
Get down ; otherwise His ribs will be broken. Oh ! how hard-hearted is the beloved wife of Śiva !
Why should He die to-day Who was not killed by drinking poison ?
Prasāda says, "It is feigned death to attain that kind death[1] !"
O merciful Mother ! do I worship Thee willingly ?
None would woship Thee, if there were no fear of death.

[1]It is a false pretence. Śiva, the Absolute, gives dominance to Divine Power to play the cosmic play.

[250]

O merciful Mother ! do I worship Thee willingly ?
None would worship Thee, if there were no fear of death.
Where art Thou, O Mother, eternal Divine Power[1] ? Thy name[2] gives release in life.
O three-eyed[3] Deity ! who else hath such power[4] ?

[1]Adyā Śakti, first cause. [2]Japa is the cause of beatitude in embodied life. [3]Omniscient. [4]Only Divine Mother can make Her devotee immortal in temporal life.

[251]

O mind ! thy illusion is not yet gone.
Being engrossed in the worship of Divine Mother[1]
Thou canst not make Viṣṇu[2] and Śiva[3] identical ;
Thou canst not comprehend the essence
Of Vṛndāvana[4] and holy Kāśī[5].
Only thou revolvest in the wheel of becoming[6], resorting to self-deception.
Comprehending the secret of the sword[7] and the flute[8] thou hast failed to act yet.
Why dost thou not think the Yamunā[9] and the Gaṅgā[10] identical ?
Prasāda says, "In confusion thine is a false prayer[11] ;
Thou thinkest Kṛṣṇa and Kālī to be different ;
Thou art blind, though possessed of eyes !

[1]Śakti. [2]God as preserver of the world. [3]God as destroyer. [4]Kṛṣṇa's abode. [5]Śiva and Durgā's (Annapūrṇa) abode. [6]Birth and death. [7]Kālī. [8]Kṛṣṇa, God of love, an incarnation of Viṣṇu. [9]Sanctified by Kṛṣṇa. [10]Sanctified by Śiva. [11]Because Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa. Śiva and Kālī are different aspects of one God. Religion is one ; forms of worship differ.

[252]

O Tārā ! purifier of the fallen sinners !
O Mother ! Thy name is Supreme Reality[1]
Thou dwellest high in the sky in fear ; I know its cause, O Mother !
Vaśiṣṭha recognised Thee, broke Thy bones, and cursed Thee[2] !
Since then Thou hast been like a serpent without a gem.
Thou wast embarrassed by the sage ; Thou art neither created[3] nor creative[4].

Thou art in the form of eternal sounds[5].

A chariot[6] is easily made by ten[7] men ; ten men's rods are one[8] man's burden.

Ten men's burdens oppress one man ; the mind only deceives itself.

Being attracted by mad Śiva's[9] advice, so long have I worshipped Thee[10].

I have embraced Thy slavery ; is there any remedy for this ?

I inflict punihment[11] on myself ; O Mother ! grant me release[12].

Thy black medicine[13] is spurious[14] ; Thy sons[15] bear testimony to this.

Tārā dwelleth in the sixteen-petalled lotus[16] and manifesteth Herself in the universe.

Prasāda says in wonder, "Tārā hideth Herself in the pupils[17] of the eyes."

[1]A Divine name is identical with God. [2]Because Tārā did not reveal Herself in an Image. [3]Uncaused. [4]Cause. God transcends time, space and causality. [5]Logos ; God manifests Himself as eternal sounds, and then as physical objects. [6]Body. [7]Sense-organs. [8]Mind (manas). [9]Author of Śākta Tantras. [10]Śakti. [11]By rubbing my nose on the ground. [12]Discharge from slavery, salvation. [13]Black Image of Tārā. [14]False ; a symbol only. [15]Worshippers of Śakti. [16]Viśuddha chakra. [17]Called 'Tārā'—half-closed eyes of meditation. Tārā's real spiritual form can be visioned in meditative trance only.

[253]

O Mother ! if one's mind is not alert, what another's instruction avails one[1] ?

He climbs a tree at another's instigation and falls and dies due to his own fault[2].

If one becomes a surety for another, one has to pay in full for another if he does not pay[3].

When weeds are weeded out in the day-time, hunters[4] do not remain at home.

Taking a spud, a spear and other weapons[5], they finish the work[5] ; if these are not available, they apply force[7] and execute their task.

Peasants cultivate their lands[8] ; mud rots forever in pools[9].
If they can weed out all weeds, they can produce a rich
harvest of gold[10].

[1]One's mind must be alert and have a steady knowledge of salvation and the means of attaining it. [2]If one follows the urge of passions, one is sure to meet death of spiritual life. [3]If one pursues passions, one has to pay the the full penalty. [4]Peasants. [5]Conscience, moral insight, discrimination, self-control, etc. [6]Extermination of passions. [7]Soul-force. [8]With continued effort, activity and perseverence. [9]Owing to laziness and inactivity. [10]Beatitude is attained by aspiration, vigilance, exertion and soul-force.

[254]

Her face is like the stainless full moon ; She is always blissful,
drunken with nectar[1].
Disembodied[2] Cupid starts at the sight of Her slim[3] body.
O King ! do not think Him[4] amiss ;
He Whom thou thinkest to be Brahman,
Lies as a corpse at Her feet ; Who is the Lady in the battle ?
The earth is the infant moon[5], sweet and smiling.
She enlightens the earth ; my life overflows with joy[6].
Ponder in thy mind : the moon, the sun
And fire are Her beautiful eyes[7] emitting rays of light.
The Lady is supreme[8] and blessed[9], whose daugher is She ?
In quest of what[10] hath She come to the battle-field[11] ?
Who are the these deformed beings[12] whose nails are like
winnows, and whose teeth are like radishes ;
Whose hair is disarrayed, and whose bodies are soiled with
dust ? they are frightening !
Poet Rāma Prasāda says, "Save Thy servant[13]
Who calls Thee 'Mother' in utter dread.
O Kālī ! if Thou do not forgive[14] his guilts,
Then, O Umā[15], who will call The 'Mother' ?

[1]Divine bliss. [2]Cupid was burnt to ashes by Śiva. [3]Beautiful. [4]Śiva. [5]Beautiful. [6]At the sight of the beautiful earth enlightened by Divine Mother. [7]She is ubiquitous. [8]Divine Power. [9]Fulfilled, perfect. [10]Purify mankind of sins. [11]Battle of life. [12]Agents of destruction. [13]The poet considers Divine Power as Lord here, and himself as Her servant. [14]"For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, eversure." Milton, Ps. [15]Durgā.

[255]

Will such a day come
When turning an ascetic I shall live at Kāśī and breathe my last there ?
There is no fear of six passions there ; victory must be mine where dwells the Conquerer[1] of Death.
As at the rise of the sun full of radiant rays darkness disappears,
So my sins will be destroyed.
Discarding desires for earthly pleasures, I shall worship Śiva and fulfil desires of my heart.
My tongue will call Mother Annapūrṇā[2], and all sins will be consumed[3].
Rāma Prasāda says, "He who worships Śiva with folded palms on the Aśī's bank near the Gaṅgā
Will be saved[4] from a great calamity[5] as Kālī Tantra declares.

[1]Śiva. [2]A form of Durgā. [3]All sins are destroyed by the worship of Divine Mother. [4]Released. [5]Bondage.

[256]

O mother ! I ponder this.
Where was I ? Where have I come ?
Where shall I go ? These are not known to me.
Six passions in my body, O Mother, give me a bad counsel ;
I tell my mind to pray to Kālī ; but they turn a deaf ear to my advice[1].

[1]Conflict between conscience and passions.

[257]

The name 'Tārā' makes all prosperity vanish.
Only a torn bag it leaves on the shoulder, but not for all times.
As a goldsmith steals gold and gives dross in lieu thereof
So Thy name destroys prosperity, O Mother, and leaves trifles in lieu thereof.

If a person utters 'Durgā' in his house, frightened by many dangers,
Thou knowest it in time, biding in his heart
O Mother ! it is very doubtful that Thy son will live at home,
Whose parents live at the foot of a tree and besmear their bodies with ashes.
Tārā has encircled Prasāda ; it is difficult to find him out.
O brothers and friends ! cherish no more hope for Prasāda.

[258]

O Mother ! I have become a strong plaintiff.
O Kālī ! try this suit with great care this time.
My mind hath become a surety ; the six respondents are elated at this.
They are the six passions, sons of my step-mother—avidyā[1].
My step-mother dies of grief, if I give not indulgence to her six sons.
If Thou and I make joint efforts, we can turn them out of this city of my body.
Then I live happily in the city of eternal bliss and cross the river of hopes and desires.
O Mother ! both plaintiff and respondent are present ; may it please Thy Majesty to try this suit justly.
This wealth acquired by myself is not my ancestral property ; how can I give them my self-acquired property ?
My Mother is the eternal Mahāvidyā[2] ; my Father is the uncaused Creator.
O Mother ! I am Thy son ; the respondents are the sons of Thy cowife ; to whom shall I appeal and pray for trial of my suit ?
Prasāda says, "I cherish some hope[3] because Father[4] is not a liar.
I have learned a lesson from the hard school of my experience ; shall I fall into a trap again ?"

[1]Avidyā is the cause of passions ; it is a product of Mahāmayā—cosmic nescience. [2]Cosmic wisdom, the cause of the saving knowledge of all. [3]That passions are controlled and mastered by ceaseless prayer and grace of Divine Mother. [4]Śiva.

[259]

My Umā[1] is not an ordinary girl.
She is not, O Mount[2], thy daughter—I tell the aright.
I am afraid to tell thee, Mount, what I have dreamt.
Oh ! Umā is on the heads of four-faced[3] and five-faced[4] gods.
She, Supreme Goddess, talks with a smiling face.
Oh ! Viṣṇu black in complexion riding Garuḍa[6] entreats her with folded palms.
Prasāda says, "O Mount ! blessed art thou who hast got such a daughter,
Who is inaccessible to sages by meditation and trance."

[1]Durgā reborn as Umā after her death on Dakṣa's sacrificial fire. [2]Dakṣa, Umā's father. [3]Brahmā. [4]Śiva. [5]Durgā, Divine Mother. [6]Bird, vehicle of Viṣṇu.

[260]

O Mount' ! when my Umā comes this time, I shall send her no more[2].
I shall not heed anybody's disgraceful remark.
If Conqueror of Death[3] comes and requests me to send her[4],
We, mother[5] and daughter, will quarrel with him, and shall not respect him as a son-in-law[6].
Dwija Rāma Prasāda says, "Can she bear such mental agony ?
Śiva roams wastes and cremation grounds and gives no thought to his home !"

[1]Dakṣa. [2]To Śiva's house. [3]Śiva. [4]Umā. [5]Menakā, Umā's mother. [6]Menakā's.

[261]

O Lord of my heart[1] ! King[2] of a Mount ! My body trembles in fear.
What a grim tale do I hear ! day[3] becomes dark[4].
The destroyer of Death[5] spreads a tiger's skin at door and calls Umā again and again, saying :
"O mother of Gaṇeśa[7] ! came out".
Oh ! thy body is made of stone ; life in my[8] body also is made of stone.

For this reason they have not been rent asunder[9].
A daughter[10] belongs to another[11] family ; my mind refuses to understand this truth.
Ah me ! what a misfortune hath been brought by Providence !
Prasāda says, "The king of Himālaya and the Queen
Drink the nectar of love of separation like a chakora[12] at dawn."

[1]Husband. [2]Dakṣa, Durgā's father. [3]Of joy. [4]Full of sorrow. [5]Śiva. [6]Durgā. [7]Śiva's son, god of success. [8]Menakā, Durgā's mother. [9]At the impending separation from daughter after three days' stay at the parents' house during the worship of Durgā in autumn. [10]Married. [11]Husband's. [12]A small bird said to live on nectar of the moon.

[262]

O King of a mount ! when Umā comes this time, I will send her no more.
Let people speak ill of me ; I will listen to the advice of none.
When Śiva, conquerer of Death, will come and request me to send Umā,
This time, we, mother and daughter, will quarrel with him, and show him no respect as a son-in-law.
Dwija Rāma Prasāda says : "Can this anguish be endured ?
Śiva roams wastes and cremation grounds and gives no thought to his family[2]."

[1]Durgā. [2]Does not earn his living and look after his wife and children.

[263]

Do go, O King of a Mount, to escort Gaurī[1] here.
How is my Umā[2] doing ?
One year is over ; darling hath gone to another's[3] house.
I have heard from Nārada : Umā is in great distress.
She hath wept bitterly before him and cried for mother.
Hemp-eater[4] is much addicted to hemp, and hath assembled all hemp-eaters[5] of the land round him.
He hath sold Umā's clothes aad ornaments to buy hemp and drink its liquid[6].

My daughter Gaurī is beautiful and perfect ; thy son-in-law is intoxicated with hemp.
He hath drunk hemp, liquid with strammonium seeds[7]—so the rumour goes.

[1]Durgā. [2]Durgā. [3]Husband's. [4]Śiva intoxicated with divine bliss. [5]Devotees, [6]Averse to worldly life. [7]Poison. Śiva is the Supreme Yogin, the Lord of penance.

[264]

O Queen ! there is a rumour in the town ; get up ; let us go.
Thy daughter is near thee.
Come ; let us go and welcome her home ; O mother ! come with me,
Jayā[1] ! what hast thou said ? thou hast bought me ; how gladsome tidings hast thou brought !
What is there I cannot give thee ? draw near me ; I shall give thee my life and discharge my debt to thee.
Queen is drenched in tears of love and walks fast ; her mass of hair gets loose.
She asks whomever she comes across how far Gaurī[2] is still.
While she walks a chariot arrives, and she beholds Umā's face.
She says, "Darling ! thou hast come, darling ! thou hast come ; darling ! didst thou forget thy mother ?
Darling says, "Oh me ! what dost thou say ?"
Umā alights from the chariot, makes obeisance to her mother, and consoles her again and again.
Servant Kavirañjana says with deep humility : "Such an auspicious day doth not happen to any one else[3]."

[1]Umā's friend [2]Umā or Durgā. [3]Because She is Divine Mother.

[265]

Today is an auspicious day for thee !
There thy daughter hath come ; go and greet her home.
Come and hehold her moon-like face ; thy intense anguish will vanish.

The smile of her moon-like face sheds a draught of nectar.
On hearing this auspicious news, the Queen runs with loose hair, and doth not hold her clothes tightly.
She is suffused with filial love ; tears roll down her eyes.
She leaves King Ḍakṣa[2] behind, embraces Umā and weeps in joy.
She seats her on her lap, beholds her moon-like face, and kisses her rosy lips.
She says, "King of a mount is thy father, and a born beggar[3] is thy husband[4].
Such an accomplished daughter as thee I have married to the sky-clad[5] Śīva."
Umā's friends are filled with joy, giggle, and hold her by the hand.
They say : "Thou didst forget us for a year ; how couldst thou forget such measureless love ?
Lift thy face and speak out ; our life is about to go out !"
Poet Rāma Prasāda laughs within himself and is immersed in an ocean of joy.
At the advent of Divine Mother[6] the people of the world are overjoyed, know not day and night, and forget even their joy[7].

[1]Menakā, Durgā's mother. [2]Her husband. [3]Indigent. [4]Śiva to marry whom Umā performed severe penances. [5]Omnipresent, Umā's parents did not know the real nature of Umā and Śiva. [6]Every autumn during the worship of Durgā for four days. [7]Due to ecstasy of joy. This is a fact and not a fiction.

[266]

O King of mount[1] ! I[2] can console Umā no more.
Umā[3] weeps, becomes sulky, and does not take breast ;
Nor does she take milk, cream or butter.
At the close of night the moon rises in the sky ; Umā says : "Catch that for me."
When she makes her eyes sore with crying, her face becomes gloomy; can a mother bear the sight ?

She catches hold of my fingers and says : "Come, mamma !", "Come, mamma !" where she wants to go I don't know.

I say to her : "Oh ! can the moon be caught ?" she throws away her clothes and beats me.

The King sits up, caresses her fondly, and seats Gaurī on his lap,

And says with a smile : "Catch this moon, O darling !" and hands a mirror to her.

On seeing her face in the mirror she is exceedingly delighted ; her face[4] excels millions of moons in beauty.

Rāma Prasāda says : "How immensely rich in merits are they to whom Mother of the universe[5] is born."

While they are talking so the World-Mother falls asleep, and they lay her on a couch[6].

[1]Dakṣa. [2]Menakā. [3]Durgā. [4]Image. [5]Divine Mother. [6]These songs are sung before Durgāpūjā in Bengal and called Āgamanī or songs in honour of the advent of Durgā at her parents' house, and evoke deep love for Her.

[267]

Let us go to the Gaṅgā and worship Śiva with beal leaves[1].
O mother[2] ! listen to thy daughter's[3] indistinct utterance.
Then Gouri's[4] golden face smiles a gentle smile.
Oh ! she calls 'mamma' !
A cuckoo coos ; a cool breeze blows ;
A peacock appears discoloured now ;
The moon is gloomy on looking at the lily,
Which is trembling and melancholy[5].
Poor Kavirañjana says, "O Durgā compassionate to the poor !
Save me from the grim ocean of becoming through Thy look of grace[6],
Save me, save me, save me."

[1]Ægle folia. [2]Menakā, Durgā's mother. [3]Umā. [4]Umā is called Gaurī because she is very fair. [5]In comparison with beautiful Umā. [6]She is ever gracious to Her child.

[268]

The Lady always stands on Śiva as a corpse.
Streams of blood adorn Her body as a lightning flashes in clouds.
How incredible it is ! She makes Her Consort a corpse !
She is Love[1] incarnate, Śiva's wife.
Her eyes are the sun and the moon ; a crescent[2] is on Her forehead ; Her face is beauteous like the full moon !
Heaps of moons bide at Her blessed feet ; Her gait is like that of an elephant.
Kavirañjana[3] says, "Devotees meditate on the form of Kālī day and night
Whose complexion resembles the dark colour of clouds[4]."

[1]Infinite Love and Bliss. [2]Occult eye seeing the past, the present and the future. [3]The poet's title. [4]She is inscrutable Mahāmāyā engaged in cosmic play causing bondage.

[269]

Who walks on the breast of Śiva ?
Her body is streaked with blood ; Her complexion surpasses new clouds in darkness ; the moon shines in Her nails.
Her face is charming like to a blue lotus ; drops of sweat[1] adorn Her body.
Beauteous pearls shine on an emerald mirror ;
Oh ! how charming is Her beauty !
Loose is Her mass of hair dark as fresh clouds ; it dispels darkness[2] on all sides.
Her foot-steps are heavy ; the tortoise[3], the serpent[4], and the earth are oppressed by Her weight and fall into a swoon.
O ! engrossed in worldly pleasures I don't worship Kālī's blest feet ; O ! I cast aside nectar[5] and drink poison[6]
This is the curse of Destiny," says Rāma Prasāda, "O ! my birth in a human body is fruitless."

[1]Due to fight with demons. [2]Meditation on Her dispels darkness of mind, delusion, attachment, and sins. [3]Support of the earth. [4]Support. [5]Divine bliss. [6]Worldly pleasures.

Cp. "How false, how vain are Man's pursuits below !
Wealth, Honour, Pleasure—what can ye bestow ?"
Coleridge.

[270]

Who is the charming Damsel, the abode of hope, Who dispels dense darkness ?

Her lustre of black colour and great splendour eclipses many a Brahmā[1] !

The moon[2] shines on the beauteous Lady's forehead ; She stands on Siva's breast with long dishevelled hair.

She wears a necklace of human heads ; She is drunken with nectar ; the noble-born Lady dances.

She walks fast, shakes others, and overpowers demons with the strength of Her arms.

Jackals cry, and turn day into night—what a wonder !

Weak and poor, wicked and hard-hearted.

Rāma Prasāda is bewildered because of Kāli's enmity[3].

[1]Creator of the world. [2]Third eye which sees the past, present and future. [3]This is a war-song about Kālī as the war-Goddess.

[271]

Whose Wife is this charming Lady of the complexion of clouds ?

Look, O King ! Her feet are placed on the breast of Śiva in the form of a corpse.

Her nails are bright resembling the full moon flashing forth rays of light constantly.

Lo ! Brahmā[1] and Viṣṇu[2] cry : "O Kāli ! do stop fighting[3]".

She is engrossed in fighting ; Her feet are strong on earth, and can move mountains.

Vāsuki[4] trembles in ceaseless fight ; is this the cause of dissolution ?

Her servant Prasāda says, "Save Thy servant ; his mind is like a mad elephant,

Always drinks the honey of earthly pleasures, wittingly wandears, and is beyond control[5]."

[1]Creator. [2]Preserver. [3]Demons. [4]A serpent with a thousand hoods supporting the earth. [5]Attachment to the world can be destroyed by God's grace only.

[272]

O ! who is the young Lady Who comes in the midst of corpes ?

The nails in Her charming hands are snow-white , Her body is tinged with the colour of clouds ; Her face is the abode of snow.

Her maids are fresh and young and make various funs ; She laughs, speaks and dances.

The young Lady of noble birth routs the demons' hosts with the strength of Her arms[1] ; She hath killed Her foes on earth, and become calm and tranquil[2].

Fierce ghosts set up a terrific cry "Kali is victorious in the battle[3]".

They clap their hands and strike their cheeks and produce tuneful sounds ;

They beat their drums and rend the sky.

Thou art the dispeller of the fear of birth and death[4] ; Thou art the universe and its creator and destroyer[5] ; Thou art holy and glorious in Thy works[6] !

On hearing Thy holiness, the conviction is firm in my mind : "I will not be born again in this dreadful world".

[1]Cp. "The arms of the wicked shall be broken ; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous." OT., Ps., 37, 7.
[2]Kālī, war-Goddess, has killed all demons and restored the moral and spiritual order among men. [3]Kingdom of God is established on earth. [4]God only can grant salvation by His grace. [5]God is immanent in, and transcendent of, the universe. [6]Holiness and glory constitute His nature. Cp. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works " OT., Ps., 145, 17.

[273]

Who is the Lady with dishevelled hair in the temple of the heart, a crematorium[1] ?

Eight hundred heads hang round Her neck ; She bears a sword in Her left hand.

Why do I behold Her so with a lolling and terrible tongue;
Her whole body stained with blood, and Her mouth laughing
a loud laughter[2]?

[1]All desires for pleasure are burnt there. [2]She is the destroyer of demons or sins.

[274]

O Kālī! what funs dost Thou make in the battle-field!
(Oh! Who is mad Mother? Who is my mad Mother
Kālī?)
Her braid of hair hangs like a dreadful serpent.
Mad, wearing dishevelled hair, Mother hath borne a sword.
O Mother! Thou hast cut off the heads of others' sons and
worn a necklace of them.
The nude Śiva is lying at Thy feet with matted hair.

[275]

Mother is always immersed in merriment and joy in the
company of Śiva.
She is intoxicated with nectar, but doth not fall down.
Her actions are contrary to custom; the earth shakes under
the weight of Her feet.
Both are alike mad[1], the sight of Them destroys all shame
and fear[2].

[1]With divine bliss. [2]Shame due to breaking social code and fear of puishment and death.

[276]

Whose wife is that Lady in the battle-field?
She surpasses a mass of blue clouds in beauty.
Who is that Lady of the colour of endless blue aparājitā
flowers?
Are those drops of sweat or nectar of the moon?
Is that Her face or the autumnal moon, friend of the lily?
The three-eyed Lady is Laksmī, daughter of the ocean,
methinks.

Oh me ! Oh me ! She smiles sweetly, the illuminer of the universe, the Consort of Śiva ?

Adorned with serpents bearing hoods ; Her teeth sparkle like a row of kunda flowers.

The tips of Her hair touch the ground ; dead infants are Her queer ear-ornaments.

A stranger to shame is She ; stranger is Her behaviour ; a young Lady in the society of demons !

O horror ! O horror ! She wears a necklace of Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa's heads ! what a huge skull in Her hand !

Well ! Well ! She bears a death-dealing staff.

Her thin waist is covered with a cluster of human hands and tiny tinkling bells.

All Her limbs are adorned with stains of blood as the spring is adorned with red flowers.

O Destroyer of death ! fix my unrestrained mind on Thy blessed feet.

Oh me ! Oh me ! all Her maids tremble with emotion and giggle ; the earth shakes.

Fearsome jackals howl ; Śiva's Wife roars on Śiva's breast.

The destroyer of the universe causes destruction ! O king of gods ! discard thy needless dejection.

Prasāda says, "O destroyer of dangers ! vouchsafe thy grace to me".

[277]

Lo ! whose Wife dances in a terrific dress ?

Oh ! Who is She Whose body resembles fresh blue clouds ? Ah me ! She treads the heart-lotus of Śiva clad in ethereal sky.

Oh ! who constructed Her, sitting in a solitary place ?

Her feet surpass red lotuses in beauty. Why does the earth, then, go to ruin ?

I fervently desire to fasten Her fast with the string of ardent love

And keep Her in my heart-lake and float Her on its waves.

Oh ! Her thighs excel plantain trees in roundness, down which streams of blood flow unceasingly
As if lightnings flash from clouds in intense rage.
Three wrinkles of Her abdominal skin meet at Her navel as if a cluster of serpents bite Her navel-lotus.
Who is She whose budding breasts are high, and whose face-lotus is haunted by humming bees
Like a blooming white lotus in a stalk of lotus.
How beautiful are Her lips ; very lolling is Her tongue ; they entrance Śiva's heart.
As if nectar floats on intoxicating wine.
Who is She Whose mass of hair hides Her face and kisses the ground ?
Her eyebrows are like to bows with arrows ; a crescent glitters on Her forehead ; Her parted hair often swings.
Oh ! a chakora plays on Her face ; a necklace of large pearls smiles in the golden ray of the morning sun.
Many Bhairavīs and Yoginīs dance and laugh loudly,
Who supply nectar in cups.
Rāma Prasāda says, "Fight with the Lady is useless,
At Whose feet lies Śiva feigning as a corpse.

[278]

The Lady of noble birth is nude, bent in three parts of Her body, funny and young in age.
The Lady routs the demons[1] in the battle[2] ; among the corpses She wears dishevelled hair.
She roars dreadfully, fights fiercely in the battle, and Her beauteous form fascinates Cupid, the god of love[3].
Ghosts, devils, Bhairavas and other attendants[4] of Śiva[5] dance merrily ;
Her merriest maids are nude and equally dressed.
She[6] swallows elephants, chariots and charioteers and strike terror into the hearts of gods, demons and men.
She walks fast, trembles and overflows with emotion ; Her waist is decked with human hands.

Prasāda says, "O Mother Kālī! the preserver of the world! be merciful[7] to me;

Take upon Thee the task[8] of taking me across the ocean of birth and death, O Consort of Śiva! destory my afflictions".

[1]Passions, vicious dispositions, sins. [2]Of life. [3]Earthly love. [4]Powers of destroying evil. [5]God of the highest Good. [6]As destroyer of evil. [7]God's grace destroys bondage. [8]One who casts his burden upon God is saved by Him.

[279]

Oh me! what a shame! a woman[1] standing upon a man[2]!
Oh! Śiva lies at Her feet, a wonderful Yogin[3].
How shameless is this woman! Thou art placing Thy feet upon Thy husband's breast.
And standing nude, eager for fighting.
Why dost Thou not look at Him? Śiva lies as a corpse.
How ruinous woman Thou art lost to shame and modesty[4]!

[1]Divine Power fighting evil for the good of mankind. [2]Impersonal Absolute—infinite existence-consciousness-bliss. [3]Absorbed in trance, divine bliss. [4]Transcending social code of morality.

[280]

Kālī is a nude woman.
I call Her 'Mother' because She doth not get angry if I commmit a sin.
She takes every care of me like my own mother.
Her mind is fickle and forgetful like that of a mad person.
Many Dākinis, Yoginis and ghosts make a great bustle.
Viṣṇu and Śiva, Lords of gods, stand before Her with folded palms.
Prasāda says, "If thou desire to depart without any trouble,
Abandon all and meditate on Her with a necklace of heads in thy heart-lotus.

[281]

Oh! Who is the enchanter[1] of all minds?
Who is there the enchanter of all hearts?

She is a stream of lightning flashes[2], an effulgence of emerald gems !
The Lady entrances our hearts, crushes the demons[3].
And eclipses blue[4] lotuses in beauty.
A creseent glitters on Her forehead ; She stands on Śiva's breast.
She is Śiva's Consort without any companion[5].
On Her forehead painted marks glare ; gems on the pendant in Her nose-ring sparkle.
Oh me ! beautiful ! behold, behold, O King ! Her face is a fountain of ambrosia[6].
She lives on cremation grounds and laughs aloud ; Her mass of hair is a cluster of clouds.
The Lady grants boons in battle[7], and crushes the demons ;
Her maids attend Her, apprehending a calamity[8].
Prasāda says, "Don't dispute ; I am disillusioned knowing ; Her[9] to be my essence.
Thou[10] shalt not be victorious ; call the merciful Divine Mother[11] "Mother".

[1]She is the most beautiful and loving. [2]In trance the Divine is visioned as lightning flashes. [3]Passions, sins. [4]Blue light represents Divine Mother. [5]Alone She fights and kills a host of demons or passions. [6]Divine bliss, supreme delight. [7]Battle of life. [8]Her defeat. [9]The Divine is the essence of the soul (jīva) ; it is an eternal spirit identical with the Divine. [10]King of demons or passions. [11]Gracious Divine Mother sublimates and transforms passions into devotional sentiments, turns demons into gods.

[282]

Oh me ! that Lady[1] fights in a battle[2] ! The Lady fights ; the earth quakes under Her feet.
She swallows chariots, charioteers, cavalry and horses.
Her body is dark[3] as Death ; eternity[4] shines on Her forehead.
Her mass of hair[5] veils the rays of the sun.
Elephants run amuck in panic as moths fly into a fire.
Methinks, the moon shoots down to earth in terror !
Peerless effulgence of Her beauty[6] penetrates the universe.

She swallows a strong army of demons[7].

Bhairavī strikes Her cheeks ; Yoginī claps her hands beating time ;

Oh me ! how sweet is the tuneful sound ! it sweetenes their songs.

A celestial maid stands nearby and supplies nectar to Her with great care.

She swings Her moon-like face and smiles sweetly.

She hath destroyed the hopes[8] of all[9], and the abodes[10] of hopes ;

All have given up hopes to live ; none will return to their homes[11].

Rāma Prasāda says the truth : "Uttering Mother Kālī's name

Go to Kailāsa[12] joyfully beating a drum."

[1]Divine Power (Mother). [2]Battle of life. [3]Inscrutable, delusion-inducing Mahāmāyā, cosmic nescience. [4]She is infinite, eternal, omnipresent. [5]More dazzling than sunlight. "All shine by the Divine light". [6]She is absolute Beauty. Earthly beauties are faint reflections of it. [7]She destroys all passions which cannot be conquered without Her grace. [8]For domination and enjoyment. [9]Demons, passions. [10]Objects. [11]Survive. [12]Śiva's abode.

[283]

Who hath come to the battle-field, a Lady[1] of the complexion of a dark night[2],

Nude[3], with loose hair, and holding a sword[4] in Her left[5] hand ?

She exults in exterminating demons[6].

The earth under Her feet is excesively frightened and trembles[7] much.

At this Śiva lies at Her feet in the battle-field.

Dwija Rāma Prasāda says, "What, then, is the cause of fear ?

Death is conquered[8] with ease in life, death and battle."

[1]Kāli. [2]Inscrutable Mahāmāyā. [3]Omnipresent. [4]For destruction of passions. [5]It is Her secondary act. Giving divine bliss is Her primary act. [6]Passions, vicious tyrants. [7]Physical calamities occur when unrighteousness prevails in the world. [8]Immortality is attained in life and after death in the spiritual struggle.

[284]

Oh ! Who is the Lady[1] Who comes with loose hair in the midst of corpses[2] ?

Her nails are like moons ; Her body is blue like clouds ; Her face is like the full moon.

Her maids are very young, and make various funs. The Lady laughs, speaks and dances.

The Lady of noble birth crushes hosts of strong demons with the strength of Her arms ; She strikes down the foes on earth[3], and is calm.

Bhairavas, ghosts and other attendants of Śiva set up a war-cry again and again ; Kāli is victorious in the battle[4] ;

They clap their hands beating time, strike their cheeks, produce peculiar sounds, and beat drums with rumbling sounds.

Kavirañjana abandons all works and rites[5] to destory the fear of death,

And hears Thy glory and constantly meditates[6] on it in his mind, and will cease to be born again in this grim world of becoming.

[1]Kālī. [2]Of demons. [3]God punishes wicked tyrants and destroys them. [4]God establishes the Kingdom of God on earth. [5]"Abandon all religious rites and take refuge with God ; He will purge you of all sins ; grieve not." BG., 18, 66.

[6]Hearing, chanting, and meditating on, God's glory constantly leads to the conquest of death and life eternal.

[285]

The Lady comes with a mass of loose hair and runs with cries 'Kill', 'Kill', 'Kill'.

She enlightens the earth with Her beauty, and is slow in Her gait like a huge elephant ; Cupid[1] faints at Her sight.

Kālī brings disgrace[2] on Her family, and humbles its dignity.

Kālī kills Niśumbha, and mows down hosts of his army.

What a great calamuty hath befallen me[3] ! I am undone for ever !

I have avoided Death so long as a calamity ;
The Destroyer of Death[4] rolls at Her feet.
Throw away ripe plantains, Gaṅgā water and bael leaves[5].
This is the result of worshipping Śiva, the Good ; it brings
about great evil.
It brings great evil to the army of demons who fill the sky with
piteous cries !
Śiva, the Lord, assumes the guise of a corpse, utterly
speechless.
Relying on whose protection shall I live ?
I recognise Her to be Divine Mother whether I win or whether
I am vanquished.
Supremely merciful She will give me refuge at Her feet.
She will give me refuge at Her feet, my mind is fixed on
them[6] ; my life and actions bear testimony to this.
Prasāda says, "Well ! this thought hath occurred to thee ;
It is difficult for thee to survive this grave crisis.
Why shouldst thou be afraid of death ? Death is the fee[7] of
birth.
O King of demons ! merge thy mind in the benign Kālī.
O King of demons ! worship the benign Kālī[8].
Why dost thou hope in vain ?"

[1]God of beauty and love. [2]By fighting demons. But She transcends relative morality of society. [3]King of demons. [4]Śiva. [5]Articles of worship. [6]His mind is fixed on destroying godly men, and so against Her. [7]Inevitable consequence of birth. "Certain is the death of a person born." BG., ii, 27.

[8]Divine Mother grants release even to the vicious if they take refuge with Her and crave for Her mercy.

[286]

Divine Mother's watchman[1] comes out in grim midnight.
Divine Mother's watchman comes out.
He cries "Victory for Kālī," "Victory for Kālī, claps his
hands
And strikes his cheeks emitting sounds 'bam', 'bam[2]'.

To frighten a devotee, at a junction of four paths in an empty house,
Ghosts, Bhairavas and Betālas[3] move about.
He[4] bears a crescent on his forehead, holds a trident in his hand
And wears a mass of matted hair touching his feet.
He is boastful like Death, first assumes the guise of a serpent in water,
Then a tiger, and then a huge bear,
Then revolves his red eyes before a devotee ;
He[5] is frightened and thinks : he will be killed by the ghost, and can't sit on his seat.
Does he who is a true devotee fall into any danger ?
The watchman being satisfied says : "Well done ! Well done !
Thou hast attained perfection[6] through thy mantra, and pleased the grim-faced Kālī ;
Thou hast conquered this life and next life[7]".
Servant poet Rāma Prasāda floats on the ocean of delight.
What hindrance is there for an aspirant[8] ?
Is he frightned by frightening appearances ? he sits on in his seat undaunted,
Making Kālī's blessed feet his shield[9].

[1]He watches a devotee in his trials and tribulations in his sādhanā. [2]Peculiar to the worshippers of Śiva. [3]Attendants of Śiva. [4]Watchman. [5]A devotee. [6]Siddhi [7]Transcended birth and death. [8]Sādhaka. [9]Protection. If a devotee is firm in his devotion to God, he is sure to triumph over all his trials and misfortunes. God protects him if he surrenders to Him completely and takes refuge with Him.

[287]

Who comes trembling with loose long hair intoxicated with nectar.
The young Lady walks quickly in the battle-field, routs the demons, and swallows elephants, holding them by Her hands.
Who is She ? Streams of blood adorn Her body as red flowers float on Yamunā's waters.

Who is She Whose face is like to a blue lotus ; a crescent shines on Her forehead ?

Who is She Whose lustre flashes like a lightning, and Whose repeated fierce war-cries pierce the sky ?

Hearts of all demons tremble like an aspen leaf in utter despair.
"O Mother ! appease Thy wrath, and repair to Thy home[2]".
This is Thy servant's earnest prayer.

[1]She destroys the wicked, and protects the righteous. [2]Kailāsa, spiritual abode.

[288]

Who is that Lady who fights in the battle-field ?
She is a noble-born young Lady, Charmer of the three worlds.
Fire burns on Her forehead ; Her left eye is the moon ; Her right eye is the sun that sustains the world.
Her transparent face resembles an emerald mirror ; Her complexion is like the colour of a new cloud.
Her feet shine like red lotuses and enhance Her beauty.
Her nails are very beautiful like to the moon full of nectar at night.
Kavirañjana says, "O gracious Charmer of Śiva ! grant me Thy grace.
O Daughter of Dakṣa ! Thou art the refuge of all ; O Mother ! Thou art my life and treasure."

[289]

Who is that Lady with loose hair ?
She entereth the battle-field in great wrath with Her sportive maids, Bhairavī and Yoginī.
She laugheth in joyace, knoweth no shame, and danceth on Śiva's breast[1].
She is engrossed in grim fighting, hath become unclad, and is inebriated with nectar.
She walketh tremulous and crieth 'Catch' laughing off and on.
Oh ! Whose wife is She ? I can't recognise Her ; She hath charmed me without Her garment.

Oh ! whom dost thou worship ? Be absorbed in Her blest feet ; Her lustre illumines ten directions.

Oh ! what shall I do in the battle[2] ? She hath enchanted my heart ; Prasāda says, "Let me go to Kailāsa[3]."

[1]She is Divine Mother manifesting in the world-play and fighting the vicious and upholding the righteous. [2]He has won the battle by Her grace. [3]Divine Mother's spiritual abode of supreme bliss.

[290]

O Kālī ! are all Thy actions contrary to custom ?
Thy Consort, Śiva, lies at Thy feet.
Thou almost killest Thy husband, and becomest husband-killer.
Śiva, Lord of the finite souls[1], is about to die.
I beg of Thee, Mother, with folded palms ;
Dance not on Śiva's breast.
The killer of Tripura[2] is on the verge of death.
O Mother, doer of good[3] to all ! desist from fighting[4] any more.

[1]Paśupati. [2]A demon. [3]"Cp. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness." OT.. Ps., 45, 7.
[4]Demons.

[291]

Śiva, the Supreme Good, lies at Her feet ; She is plunged in the army of foes ; Her hair is loose.

Her face is beauteous like the moon ; the complexion of Her body surpasses a young tamāla[1] plant.

Yoginis and Bhairavīs[2] are in the battle-field ; they clap their hands beating time.

She is enraged in mind ; Her big eyes drink blood[3] from high above.

Her hosts of attendants strike their limbs in unison,
And produce a harmony of melodious music.

Prasāda says, "O beautiful Kālī! save my future life:
Grant me a particle of Thy grace, and save me from grim Death[5]."

[1]Black. [2]Her attendants, agents of destruction. [3]Demons. [4]Prevent my rebirth. [5]For good.

[292]

Śiva moves about absorbed in His meditation; Śaṁkara[1] moves about engrossed in His meditation.
He blows His horn, strikes His cheeks, and produces peculiar sounds[2].
Being plunged in ecstasy, the Lord of pramathas[3], and holding a small rattling drum in his hand,
Moves about on cremation grounds,[4] singing, in the company of millions of dānavas.
He has a tiger's skin[5] round His waist; a necklace of bones swings round His neck.
A serpent[6] encircles His body like a sacred thread, and hisses fiercely in pride.
A crescent[7] adorns His forehead; the eyes like chakoras are motionless
In greed of its honey[8], and think how they will get it.
Half moon[9] sparkles beautifully; fire[10] burns in His eyes steadily
And kindles brightly at intervals the sight whereof drives passions away.
His body is besmeared with ashes; He is beautifully dressed; His lips are red like the rising sun.
Vāsuki[11] encircles His neck, as if He were a corpse; He is the Supreme Yogin, the Lord[12] of gods.
The bull[13] walks slowly; Śiva rattles a small drum.
He beats time, sings Viṣṇu's[14] glory, and dances.
His face is beautiful like the full moon; the Gaṅgā[15] flows and murmurs on His head.
Waves rise and fall and murmur in His matten hair.

Prasāda says, "This world of becoming is grim ; Death is near at hand, and using force on me.
I can't snap the bond of Karma[16] ; save[17] me through Thy grace".

[1]The Supreme Good. [2]"Baba baba bam." [3]Śiva's attendants. [4]Symbol of burnt desires. Śiva is self-fulfilled Absolute. [5]He is an ascetic. [6]Symbol of Kuṇḍalinī, Divine Power completely manifested in Him. [7]Occult eye representing omniscience. [8]Nectar. [9]Crescent. [10]Fire of His penance burns passions. [11]Supporting the earth. [12]Absolute. [13]Śiva's vehicle. [14]Preserver. [15]He is the Holy. [16]Ignorance, attachment, and potencies of actions—causes of rebirth. [17]From birth and death.

[293]

Śiva, the Supreme Good, is inebriated with hemp[1] ; His big eyes are half-closed[2].
Strammonium flowers[3] are stuck to His ears ; He is white[4] as silver ; a tiger's skin hangs from His waist[5].
He blows a horn and rattles a small drum
And strikes His cheeks, and makes peculiar sounds.
The Gaṅgā[6] flows with a murmur in His matted hair ; terrific serpents[7] hiss.
The Supreme Yogin[8] is absorbed in meditation ; a painted mark adorns His forehead ; a fire[9] glares there.
Nandī and Bhṛṅgī are very wanton[10] ; His attendants are hosts of pramathas[11] !
They dance[12] in accord and in disaccord, stamping their feet wildly.

[1]Symbol of divine bliss. [2]In meditation. [3]His favourite flowers with which He is worshipped. [4]Symbol of supreme wisdom. [5]He is an ascetic. [6]Holy. Śiva is the abode of supreme holiness. [7]Serpent Power, Divine Power, is completely manifested in Him. [8]Absolute, Sacchidānanda. [9]Omniscient occult eye. [10]Observe no laws. [11]Agents of destruction. [12]Death dance. Śiva as Destroyer of the world is personal and called Rudra. He is Absolute as impersonal.

[294]

Forgetful[1] Śiva utters 'baba bam bam'.
Like Woman[2] like man[3], and like two disciples[4].

Śiva rides a bull, bears a horn and a small drum in His hands,
utters Hari[5], and wears a rosary of beads.
The Gaṅgā flows on His head with a murmur.
A serpent sits on His head and half moon adorns His forehead.

[1]Of the world and easily satisfied with His worshippers. [2]Durgā or Kālī. [3]Śiva. [4]Nandī and Bhṛṅgī. [5]Viṣṇu.

[295]

Worship the feet of Master[1].
He opens one's blind eyes and dispels all one's doubts.
He applies the collyrium of knowledge[2] to one's blind eyes,
And utters a dear name[3] to one's ears.
Master is exceedingly merciful and makes one cross the sea of
birth and death.
He is the cause of the destruction of fear of death.
"I cherish his holy feet in my heart," says Prasāda,
"They are the destroyer of death".

[1]Guru. [2]Saving knowledge. [3]Divine name or mantra.

[296]

Who is She Whose complexion excels the colour of a blue
lotus ; Whose hair is loose ?
Oh ? Who is She devoid of garment in the battle-field ?
She is a paragon of beauty with breasts which burn all lusts ;
the Lady walks with a smiling face.
She roars like thunders of dissolution, and always cries 'Stop'
'Stop'.
She enchants the hearts of all ; She is like to the sister of Death,
and humbles the pride of foes[1].
She hath just completed the training in using missiles and
weapons, and just entered on youth ; Her military skill
is invincible.
He directly goes to the city of Death at whom She looks with
wrathful eyes[2].

Prasāda says, "Oh! Mother of the universe destroys the foes[3] in the battle-fied.
Cast aside Thy threatening posture[4]; grant a trace of Thy grace[5], and protect the gods[6]."

[1]Divine Mother is beautiful and terrific, doer of good and destroyer of evil. [2]Her wrath is irresistible. [3]Demons or demoniac persons. [4]Sternness. [5]Loving kindness. [6]Godly men. Destroy the demons, protect the gods, and establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Cp. "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day." OT., Ps., 7, 11. "Evil-doers shall be cut off; but those who wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." Ibid, 37, 9.

[297]

Who is that Lady uttering a war-cry in the battle-field?
Who is that Lady who calms the passion of lust[1]?
Who is that three-eyed beautiful Lady Whose body is slim and dark like the petal of a blue lotus, and Whose third eye is the moon[2] which burns the sun[3]?
Without clothes is the young Lady[4]; Her loose hair touches the ground; She is proficient in the art of fighting[5], and the abode of excellent qualities[6].
Prasāda says aright, "He who is present before the Saviour Mother[7] conquers Death[8] by beating a drum."

[1]Passions can be conquered by meditation on Divine Mother. [2]Peace-giving. [3]Fierce passions. [4]Omnipresent. [5]Destroying the wicked. [6]Perfection and holiness. [7]"Cultivate the presence of the Mother." (Aurobindo). [8]One abiding in Divine Mother enters into life eternal.

[298]

Who is that dark Lady in the battle-field?
Oh! Her body is powdered collyrium; Her face is the autumnal moon.
Her hair is loose and adorned with flashes of lightning.
How strange is Her action! She is lost to all sense of shame!
There She fills Her mouth with chariots, charioteers, elephants and horses!

The army of gods is strong ; the army of demons is reduced in strength ; they are disheartened, bewildered and frightened.

She assumes the form of Death and possesses tremendous prowess.

There lies the destroyer of Cupid under Her feet ; what kind of Lady is this ?

Lo ! the young Lady jumps over the sky, seas and mountains in the twinking of an eye.

She is the means of crossing the dreadful ocean of birth and death[1].

She hath made those blest feet a bridge[2] for thee.

Kavirañjan Rāma Prasāda says, "O Mother Kālī ! grant me a trace of Thy grace[3].

[1]Devotion, love, prayer, self-surrender to Divine Mother lead to salvation. [2]To cross the sea of becoming. [3]Beatitude is due to Her grace. Cp. "Withhold not thy tender mercies from me, O Lord ; let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me." OT., Ps., 40, 11

[299]

Who is the charming Young Lady, exquisitely beautiful, with a black moon on Her forehead ?

She walks in the battle-field with loose hair.

Her body resembles the darkest night of the new moon ; She is in the prime of Her youth, slim and unclad[1].

She holds a head and a sword in Her left hands[2] and assures safety and grants boons with Her right hands[3].

Oh ! how enchanting is Her beauty ! behold, O king of demons !

Is She a goddess, or a female demon, a female Nāga or a woman ?

Śiva by Whose strength I wish to be victorious lies as a feigned corpse[4].

He is the destroyer of Death at Her feet meseems.

She assumes many magic forms, enchants the heart in a moment, enlarges Her body, and laughs terror-striking laughs.

Now She runs on earth, and then soars into the sky ;
She gobbles chariots, charioteers, horses and elephants[5].
Rāma Prasāda says truly, "Thou knowest not Mother's greatness[6].
She is the power of Brahman, eternal dynamic consciousness.
He who is Kṛṣṇa[7] is Kālī[8] in the form of a charming Lady.
Wipe out the forms[9], and think of Her sword as His flute[10].

[1]Because She is omnipresent. Cp. "The heavens are thine ; the earth also is thine ; as for the world and the fullness thereof, thou hast founded them." OT., Ps., 89, 11
[2]Destroyer of the wicked. Cp. "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them." OT., Ps., 5-4-5.
[3]She is the refuge and giver of boons. Cp. "Delight thy self in the Lord ; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart " OT., Ps., 37, 4.
[4]Śiva is static Absolute, infinite, being-knowledge-bliss. [5]She is omnipotent.
[6]She is possessed of inconceivable greatness and infinite excellent qualities.
[7]God as Lover. [8]God as Power, dynamic, creative and destructive consciousness. [9]God is one in all forms. [10]Divine Power is Love and Delight, redeeming and attractive. Cp. "God sitteth on the throne of holiness." OT., Ps., 47, 8.
"There is one God ; and none other but he." NT., St. Mark., 12, 32.
"With God nothing shall be impossible." NT., St. Luke, 1, 37.
"God is love. We love him, because he first loved us." NT., John's first epistle, 4, 16 & 19.

[300]

The beautiful young Lady walks on Śiva ; Her mass of hair is loose ; human hands hang round Her waist.
The moon, the sun and fire are Her eyes[1] ; the full moon shines on Her most beauteous face[2].
Her ears are adorned with dead infants pierced by arrows ;
Her two left hands hold a head and a sword[3].
Her two right hands give assurance of safety[4] and offer boons[5] ; the most beautiful Lady[6] is ink-black in complexion[7].
She is always drunken with divine bliss[8] ; Her limbs are drooping ; Her laughter sheds a large draft of nectar.
She is clad in the whole universe[9] ; the young Lady of sixteen[10] is favourable to the king of gods[11], and cries out 'Be not afraid,' 'Be not afraid'.

O Consort of Śiva ! be merciful to Prasāda who is mortally afraid of the ocean of birth and death[12] !

Devise a means of destroying his pangs of birth for ever ; Gayā, Gaṅgā and Kāśī lie at Thy blessed feet[13].

[1]She is omniscient. [2]She illumines the universe and the souls. [3]She is the destroyer of the demons. [4]She is the safe refuge of all souls. [5]She fulfils the desires of her devotees. [6]She is the absolute Beauty. [7]As Mahāmāyā She creates the world and embodied souls and veils their real nature. [8]She creates and destroys out of infinite delight for Her cosmic play, and upholds the righteous and destroys the vicious. [9]She is omnipresent. [10]She is eternally young. [11]She is benign to the godly and malign to the demoniac persons. [12]She is the cause of bondage and salvation, though She gives limited freedom to the souls. [13]She gives them divine bliss.

[301]

Oh ! who comes that Lady, dark as clouds ?

Oh ! who is that young Lady, nude[1] and shameless[2], the enchanter[3] of the world ?

Doth it behove a youug Lady of a noble family ?

Her gait is like that of a strong elephant ; She is drunken with nectar.

Her tongue is lolling ; Her hair is loose.

Gods and men are terrified by the sight of Her form[4].

She routs the demons with Her terrific war-cry.

Oh ! who is She Whose fingers[5] are like the buds of fresh blue lotuses,

Which are bitten by black bees ?

Chakoras[6] mistake Her face for the full moon and suck with their lips.

Black bees and chakoras quarrel with one another ;

The former say : 'This is a blue lotus' ; The latter say : 'This is the moon'.

The two parties cry aloud ; the bees hum, and the birds chirp.

Oh ! Who is She whose beauteous thighs resemble the

plantain trees, wherefrom streams of blood flow ceaselessly.

Above them She hath a string on Her waist, to which a cluster of hands is fastened, and which is decked with tiny tinkling bells.

Her palms are surpassing bright ; She holds a sword and a head in Her left hands and assures safety, and grants boons with Her right hands.

She cuts chariots, elephants and horses to pieces ; Her maids cry out 'Victory,' 'Victory'.

Oh ! Who is She Whose breasts strike terror into the hearts of foes[7] who prick the heads of their elephants with iron hooks to fly away ?

Oh ! how charming ! She wears a necklace with Chaṇḍa's head as a pendant ; the charming Lady wears charming ornaments !

Her mouth sparkles in Her cheerful face ; gentle smile ripples on Her lips ; a lightning flashes in the tiny pendant on Her nose-ring.

Her three eyes[8] of the sun, the moon, and fire wink ; the earth trembles under Her frequent jumps.

[1]Ubiquitous and creator of all. [2]Supramundane holiness. [3]Cosmic nescience generating the world of appearances and avidyā in the souls. [4]Terrific. [5]Beautiful. [6]A kind of patridge that is said to live on the nectar of the moon. [7]Demons. [8]Omniscient.

[302]

In Śiva's[1] kingdom shines His beloved Consort[2] ;

As if a blue lotus[3] shines in the centre of a white tank[4].

Her feet shine like the morning sun ;

Her nails shine like the infant moons ; She is devoid of dress and nude[5].

Her thighs are round like the plaṇtain trees ; Her navel is deep like a tank.

Demons' heads adorn Her waist with tiny tinkling bells.

Her high breasts, the receptacle of nectar, adorn Her form.

Gods and men are always delighted in drinking it ; it is the water which is our daily drink[6].

Her four hands are adorned with a sword, ahead, safety, and boons ;

She is the terror of Her foes[7], but always ready to grant safety to Her devotees[8].

The young Lady hath a terrific mien ; Her lolling tongue is red ;

Her tongue sparkles like holy places ; Her laughter is loud and sweet.

The sun, the moon and fire are Her three beauteous eyes[9].

Her forehead is finely painted with vermillion ; She bears a crescent on it.

Two dead infants swing on Her ear-roots ;

Lightning[10] always flashes on Her smiling lips.

Her mass of loose hair touches Her feet ;

As if intoxicated bees surround a blue lotus.

Her complexion resembles the colour of fresh clouds ; She is the abode of peerless beauty[11].

She is the wealth[12] of devotees, and the treasure of the Prince of Yogins[13].

O Kālī ! the destroyer of Death ! the killer of threefold sufferings and sins !

Thou art the giver of salvation to Prasāda, and of the nature of Infinite Brahman[14].

[1]Absolute, impersonal, static Brahman. [2]Kālī, personal, dynamic Divine Power. [3]Kālī. [4]Śiva. [5]Ubiquitous. [6]She is the sustainer of all creatures. "Who would live if Brahman were not of the nature of bliss ?" Tait. Up.

[7]She destroys the wicked. [8]She fulfils the righteous desires of Her devotees. [9]She is omniscient. [10]She illumines the darkness of Her devotees' hearts. [11]She is the absolute beauty, the ideal of beauty realised. "God is the most beautiful in all worlds." Bhāgavata. [12]The most coveted object. [13]Śiva, the perfect Yogin. [14]Divine Power identical with Brahman, Absolute.

[303]

The young Lady is Kālī, the abode of excellent qualities[1], on the breast of Śiva, the destroyer of Death.
She walks on Him Who burnt Cupid[2] into ashes.
Is She a goddess, a female elephant, a female serpent, or a woman[3] ?
A pearl hangs from Her nose and looks like a chakora[4] in the lap of the full moon ;
It swings slightly ; gentle smile ripples on Her lips.
What a wonder ! She enters into the battle-field, catches and holds aloft elephants in Her hands.
She is slim, very young, unrobed, and sixteen in years[5].
Her face eclipses the beauty of a blue lotus ; Her smile is sweet, and flashes forth lightning.
Her budding breasts are unmanifest ; a crescent shines on Her forehead.
Her crafts and tricks are various and make a deep impression on my mind.
The lady is very young, noble, of irresistible gait and matchless beauty.
Hosts of demons enter into water and fight fiercely.
Who is She Who destroys heaps of mental anguish ?
O ! how ruinous ! She humbles all my pride.
Servant Rāma Prasāda says, "She dispels a mass of dense darkness[6] ;
Kālī of long, loose hair always dwells in my heart-lotus.
I am victorious in this life and in the next life ; I don't care a straw for Death[7] !
My words are prefectly true : Death is stilled ; I have entered into Śiva[8]".

[1]Divine Mother. [2]Śiva destroyed the god of love. [3]Inscrutable Mahāmāyā. [4]Greek partridge said to live on the nectar of the moon. [5]Eternal youth. [6]Her grace removes all darkness and delusion of mind. [7]The poet-saint has won the battle of life and attained transcendence of temporal life and immortality. [8]Absolute. A soul is a spark of the Divine and returns to the Divine.

A spark disturbs our clod
Nearer who hold of God." R. Browning.
"Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure :
Time's wheel runs back or stops ; Potter and clay endure." Ibid.
"God is identity : God all in all !
We and our Father one !"

Coleridge.

[304]

O ! Who is that enchanting Lady of dark complexion resembling fresh blue clouds ?
New moon and infant sun equally shine on Her feet.
Her face dazzles like millions of full moons ; Her speech is sweeter than nectar[1].
Two dead infants are ornaments in Her ears ; Her mass of hair hangs loose[2].
A beauteous necklace hangs round Her neck, and always touches Her hips.
The Lady's left hands bear a sword and a human head ; Her right hands bear complete fulfilment of desires[3].
A crescent shines on Her forehead ; She stands on Śiva, the killer of Death, and sets up a grim cry[5] off and on.
Kavirañjana says, "This is my humble prayer :
Destory my sins by casting a glance of grace at me[4].
He to whose tongue Thy name is revealed, can comprehend the meaning of this song."

[1]Divine Mother is benign and full of nectar, divine bliss, or immortality. [2]She is terrific and malign to demons. [3]She is the upholder of goods and destroyer of evil. [4]God's grace destroys all sins. [4]Occult eye. [5]War-cry in the battle of life.

[305]

The Lady is young and fresh like a lotus, and enraptures all hearts.
Her mass of hair hangs ; She is slow in Her gait like a goose, devoid of garment, standing on a corpse, and inebriated with nectar.

She is sixteen, proficient, artless, and resembles the full moon.
An infant sun and a moon shine on Her forehead ; Brahmā and a moon deck Her ears.
She is beautiful, sweet-faced, and of sweet longings.
She is the beloved Consort of Śiva with moon on His forehead, the abode of gods[1], and worshipped by Mercury, Jupiter and inauspicious Saturn[2].
She hath a deer's eyes[3] and a lion's waist[4], and is worshipped by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva[5].
He who worships Her clad in the sky is dear to God.

[1]She is the embodiment of Truth, Good, Beauty, and the Holy. [2]Presiding Deities of these planets. [3]Restless. [4]Slim. [5]Creator, preserver and destroyer of the world appointed by Divine Mother.

[306]

O Mother ! How charmingly Thou dancest in the battle.
Incomparable is Thy garment ; loose and hanging is Thy hair.
Unclad art Thou on Śiva's breast ; how beautifully Thou dancest in battle !
Thou wearest a necklace of heads of demons just killed, that touch Thy well-formed hips.
Thy waist is decked with hands of demons, and Thy ears with dead infants.
Thy lips excel in beauty all others in the world ; Thy teeth are beauteous like to blooming kuṇda flowers.
Thy face is like a blooming lotus ; Thou laughest aloud again and again.
Thy complexion is like the colour of a rain-laden cloud ; Thy feet are dyed with blood which enhances their beauty.
Prasāda says, "My mind dances ; can mine eyes enjoy Thy beauty completely ?"

[1]The beauty of Divine Mother is beyond the grasp of the sense-organs. It is eternal and absolute ; beauty in the world is a faint shadow of it. She is eternal Truth, eternal Good, and eternal Beauty.

[307]

The beautiful Lady of bright black complexion walks on the breast of Śiva, the destroyer of Tripura[1].

Her immaculate feet resemble the petals of a red lotus ; Her nails emit cool rays of the moon.

Her loud laughter dispels a mass of darkness[2] ; nectar flows from Her nectarine speech[3].

Restless bees sit on the young Lady's lips quickly, taking them for petals of red lotuses.

She is young and lean, unrobed and charming ; yet She is unkind and shows no mercy[4].

Volleys of sharp arrows shot by Her restless hands destroy the lives of countless foes[5].

Poet Rāma Prasāda says, "Mine eyes are filled with tears by meditating on Mother's black[6] beauty[7].

May my mind bide at Her lotus feet[8] : this is my heart's desire".

[1]A demon. [2]Divine Mother destroys avidyā and gives light and knowledge.

Cp. "Thou wilt light my candle ; the Lord my God will illumine my darkness." OT., Ps., 18, 28.

[3]Nectar (amṛta) means divine bliss, immortality. The scriptures are Her words. Cp. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for instruction in righteousness."

NT., Paul's second epistle to Timothy, 3, 16.

[4]She is just, severe and merciful. [5]She is the upholder of the righteous and destroyer of the wicked. [6]As Mahāmāyā. [7]As Mahāvidyā. Cp. "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." OT.. Ps., 29, 2.

[8]"Abiding in the Divine is the final destiny of a devout soul." BG., 9, 18. Cp. "Abide in me, and I in you. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." NT., St. John, 15, 4-5.

[308]

Whose wife is that Lady sitting alone on that lotus[1] ?

Her face beams with smile[2], lightning[3] flashes from the corner of Her eyes.

Such a damsel have I never seen or heard of in my life[4] !

She catches and swallows[5] elephants and disgorges them again,
albeit She be in Her first youth[6] and of sixteen years[7].

[1]Chakra. [2]Indicating grace. [3]Saving knowledge, light of knowledge. [4]Eternal archetype of beauty. [5]Destroyer of the wicked tyrants. [6]Eternal youth. [7]Symbol of the qualities of Divine Mother.

[309]

O mad mind ! how dost thou worship Her in a dark room ?
She is the object of love[2] ; can She be realised without love ?
O mind ! first conquer lust by rousing Divine Power.
Oh ! There is a secret chamber[3] in thy house[4] ; She will hide[5] Herself at dawn.
She could not be grasped by six systems of philosophy nor by Vedas and Tantras.
She is the relisher of the sentiment of devotion, and abides in eternal bliss in the house.
She is the supreme Yogin absorbed in the ecstasy of love, and meditates in all ages.
When love emerges, She attracts one as a magnet attracts iron.
Prāsāda says, "Whom I worship as Divine Mother
Shall I disclose[6] in public ? O mind ! comprehend it through hints[7] only."

[1]Body in which Divine Power is not roused. [2]Pure, desireless love. [3]Suṣumnā with chakras. [4]Body. [5]Fall asleep. [6]Secret of Śakti-sādhanā should not be disclosed to the non-believers. [7]Master's instructions.

[310]

This time I have got a secret of spiritual culture,
I have dedicated my life to Kālī's secure feet.
Getting this sceret from Śiva, I have won Him over.
So discarding love, hate and greed[1], I have fixed my mind on sattva[2].
Tārā's name is the essence of the reality ; I have treasured it on the crown of my head.

I have done honour to Durgā's name by muttering it always.
Prasāda says, "I have known for certain that I must depart;
Taking the name of Durgā as capital of my journey I have made a start".

[1]Due to tamas aud rajas. [2]Purity which produces knowledge and happiness.

[311]

O mind! cry 'Victory to Kālī,' 'Victory to Kālī'; and keep awake[1].
O forgetful mind! don't fall asleep[2]; if thou do so, thou wilt lose thy treasure[3].
When thou wilt fall asleep in a cosy bed in a room of nine doors[4],
And be unconscious, thieves[5] will break into it, and steal all thy treasure.

[1]Constant vigilance is necessary for sādhanā. [2]Be off your guard. [3]Spiritual wealth. [4]Body of nine apertures,—two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, a mouth, a generative organ, an excretive organ. [5]Passions.

[312]

O Mother! my play is over.
O blissful Divine Mother! my play is over.
I came to earth to play; I have played with dust.
O daughter of a mount! Death hath drawn nigh in proper time.
My childhood was wasted in vain frolics.
Then my breath was wasted in dalliance of love with my wife.
Prasāda says, "I am disabled in old age; what can I do now?
O Mother, Divine Power, grant me devotion[1] and drag me to the waters of release[2].

[1]The cult of Śakti regards devotion as a potent means of God-realisation, which is given by Divine Mother. [2]Sometimes the poet treats devotion as higher than release.

[313]

O Kālī ! let me tell Thee my story of suffering.
Who calls Thee compassionate to the poor, O Mother ! Thou art stony-hearted.
Thou hast given some, O Mother, wealth, attendants, horses, elephants, and chriots, and made them victorious.
Thou hast made some day-labourers, who get not potherbs with rice.
Some live in palaces ; I desire to do so.
O Mother ! are they Thy father's spiritual guides, and am I none to Thee ?
Some are clad in double shawls, and eat curds and sugar with rice.
Others are destined to live on rice mixed with sand, and parched paddy with husks.
Some are carried in palanquins, but I carry loads.
O Mother ! have I destroyed Thy rich harvest ?
Prasāda says, "Forgetting Thee, I suffer from misery.
O Mother ! I yearn to turn into dust under Thy secure feet."

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